1908

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CHARACTERS

Faust	Burgomaster
Mephistopheles	Frosch
Margaret	Siebel
Martha	Lisbeth
Valentine	Elsa
Brander	Lisa
Altmayer	Laine

The Witch

Apes, Witches, Students, Soldiers, etc. etc.

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PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE

SCENE.—*A range of mountains between Heaven and Earth.*

[*The Archangels* RAPHAEL, GABRIEL, *and* MICHAEL *discovered. A faint* CHORUS *of invisible* ANGELS *from above.*

RAPHAEL. The sun his ancient music makes,
Rolling amid the rival spheres ;
Still his predestined course he takes
In thunder speed throughout the years.
By angels, though uncomprehended,
Strength from his aspect still is drawn ;
The universe abideth splendid,
And fresh as at Creation's dawn.

GABRIEL. Swift, beyond understanding quite,
Circles the earth in glorious guise,
Now plunged into profoundest night,
Now sparkling into paradise.
The ocean foams up from the deep,
And over ricks and crags is hurled,

And crags and ocean onward sweep—
On with the rapid spheres are whirled.
MICHAEL. Contending tempests rage and rain
From land to land, from sea to sea ;
Weaving a girdle and a chain
Out of their hissing enmity.
A flashing desolation thence
Ushers the awful thunder-way ;
But, Lord, Thy servants reverence
The gentle order of the day.
ALL THREE. By angels, though uncomprehended,
Strength from Thy aspect still is drawn ;
The Universe abideth splendid,
And fresh as at Creation's dawn.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *appears suddenly on the peak. He is dressed in a glimmering robe suggestive of a glory obscured.*

[NOTE ON APPEARANCE OF MEPHISTOPHELES :—*Both in the Prologue and in the Epilogue of this drama* MEPHISTOPHELES *appears as the Fallen Angel or Satan of tradition. His speech is suited to this character. But when in pursuit of his wager and the soul of* FAUST *he*

appears on earth, he has put on the form he judges most serviceable to his ends—that of a cavalier-troubadour of the Middle Ages; and his speech is light, cynical, and of the world.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Hail to mine ancient friends, my present foes!
This neutral mountain between Hell and Heaven
Is still permitted to these exiled feet;
Here may my Darkness mingle with your Light.

RAPHAEL. Whence com'st thou now?

MEPHISTOPHELES. From yonder speck, the Earth;
From wandering up and down upon the place,
And pacing to and fro in hate unresting.
And yet man so torments himself, my toil
Seems idle: and heedless my unceasing task.
I would he were more difficult to damn!
He is a grasshopper that flies and springs,
And from the grass the same old ditty sends.
Better he always lay among the grass.
Had I a free rein given me to seduce,
There is no soul on earth I could not win
Were it permitted me.

[*Stretching his hand upwards.*

[*An* ANGEL *descends from above, and stands on a superior peak at back.*

ANGEL. It is permitted!
Man writhes to glory but through pain of error.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Angel sent down from bliss! Have I permission
Whence all permission flows, to lure and snare
A human soul, and draw it my own way?
However rich or rare, I will seduce it.

ANGEL. Whence all permission flows, thou hast permission.

MEPHISTOPHELES. A wager vast! Look down upon the earth! [*He points downward.*
Whom shall I choose? That theologian
That sits and blinks at Truth, and toys with words?
Too easy! Or yonder mighty emperor,
Who sitteth, dark against the Orient,
Throned above prostrate millions? No, not him!
My victory shall be deep and not of show.
Or yonder lady in the convent garden
Pure from the world, and pacing lawns of peace?
Not her! No spirit starved will I select!
See! I will choose for test a rarer soul!
Yonder he sits, the famous Doctor Faust.

Has Heaven a better servant on the Earth?

ANGEL. None!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Yonder soul I choose then for my wager;

Nothing the tumult of his heart assuages,
For all of Earth and all of Heaven he asks.
The ferment drives him to the far-away.
And yet is he half-conscious of his madness.
To grasp the far the near he hath neglected,
And still has nothing grasped, and now regrets
The once despiséd pleasures of the world.
I will so draw him onward to lost pleasures,
So plunge him deep in sensuality,
His heavy soul no more shall upward strive.

ANGEL. So long as he is breathing on the earth,

So long is nothing unto thee forbidden.
Thou art permitted to ensnare the spirit
Of Faust, and turn it from the fountain-head;
Till thou shalt stand abashed at last, and learn
That a good man, though in the dark he strives,
Hath still an instinct for the truer way.

RAPHAEL. And thou shalt batter thee, and all in vain,

Against an influence appearing slight,
And frail as the resistance of a flower;

And yet a power thou canst not comprehend.
He through the woman-soul at last shall win.

ANGEL. Man is too prone to slumber, and he needs
As a companion one who goads and works,
And who, being devil, must be up and doing.

ALL THREE. But we to Eternal Beauty turn again,
Lord, and in bliss Thy splendours contemplate;
Though we Thy angels may not fathom them,
Thy works are fresh as at Creation's day.

RAPHAEL. [*Turning towards* MEPHISTOPHELES.] And thou! Wilt thou not cease vain war with Heaven?
To will the evil, and achieve the good?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Never! Until that hour when the Usurper,
Who wrested from my mother Night her reign,
And fevered Chaos with his blistering stars,
Shall be himself deposed, consent, and cease.
For this same light but lives by what it breeds,
A carrion offspring suckled by the sun.
And never will I cease this war with Heaven
Till the bound elements shall mutiny,
And the imprisoned thunder shall be freed,
And old tremendous blasts shall fly abroad,

And all His millions of rash fires be quenched ;
And space shall be again as once it was
Ere He disturbed us with his fiery brain,
Timeless and tideless, limitless and dark !
Mother ! Still crouching on the bounds of light,
With face of sea and hair of tempest, still
Huddled in huge and immemorial hate,
Behold thy son, and some dark aid extend !
So, Faust, to win this wager and thy soul,
Pass we from Heaven across the Earth to Hell.

[*Thunder and darkness as* MEPHISTOPHELES, *with wings outspread, swoops suddenly like lightning downwards to the Earth.*

ACT I

ACT I

SCENE.—*A gloomy, narrow Gothic chamber.*

[FAUST *at his desk, restless. Midnight.*

FAUST. Alas! What boots it to have mastered now
Philosophy, Medicine, even Theology,
With unremitting zeal and toil unceasing?
Lo! here I sit no wiser than before.
True! I can lead my scholars by the nose;
They hail me master, doctor, fawn on me,
But I, I know how deep is my defeat,
I only know that nothing can be known.
[*A pause.*
And urged by this insane and desert thirst,
What have I missed! All honour, rank, and wealth,
Even the thrill of kisses and of wine.
Science, farewell! To Magic now I turn;
From Magic I may wring some secret yet,

And learn what forces bind and guide the world.

[*Moonlight floods the room.*

O thou full moon, whom I so many a night
Have watched ascending! Would that thou didst gaze
For the last time upon my trouble! Ah,
If now no longer stifling amid books,
I in thine argent twilight floated free!
But no, this dungeon-lumber I behold,
A self-created prison of mould and dust,
Where God His pulsing human creature set.
I dwell but with the dead—in what a world!

[*He turns to the Magic book.*

Here is my way of freedom: here the sign
Of the Earth-Spirit. How dost thou invade me!
How like new wine thou runnest in my veins!
The woe of Earth, the bliss of Earth invite me.
The lamp goes out—a horror from the roof
Descends on me. Spirit, reveal thyself!
I feel thee suck my soul, absorb my heart,—
I'll look on thee, although my life it cost me.

[*He seizes the book and pronounces the sign of the Earth-Spirit.*

[*The* SPIRIT *appears in a flame.*

SPIRIT. Who calls me?

FAUST. Terrible to look on!

SPIRIT. Me

Hast thou with might attracted from my sphere.

FAUST. Woe! I endure not thee!

SPIRIT. Yet didst thou long

To gaze on me: thy yearning drew me down.

Where art thou, Faust? whose strong voice pierced to me?

Is't thee I see—this terror-stricken worm?

FAUST. I fear no more—I am Faust—I am thy peer!

SPIRIT. Thou art like the Spirit which thou comprehendest,

Not me!

[SPIRIT *disappears.*

FAUST. Not thee! I, image of the God-head!

[*A knock.*

Death! At this moment this poor witless wretch

Disturbs me, teasing me from the full vision!

[*Enter* WAGNER *with a lamp.*

WAGNER. Surely, you read some old Greek tragedy:

I heard the declamation—and a preacher

They say might learn from a comedian.

FAUST. [*Irritably.*] Yes, when the preacher,
as the case is often,
Is in himself a born comedian.
WAGNER. I've studied long to be an orator.
FAUST. Studied! What use! unless heart
speaks to heart?
If children's monkey's gaze be to your taste,
Then be content! 'Tis all that study gives you.
Read, read! and stand a tinkling fool at last.
WAGNER. Ah, God! but art is long, and
life is short,
And then to die, so many books unscanned!
FAUST. Is parchment thy sole fount of
inspiration?
Is this the draught that slakes th' eternal thirst?
WAGNER. And yet to apprehend the mighty
world!
FAUST. Those few who apprehended it at all
And dared to bare their breasts unto the brand,
Have evermore been burned or crucified.
And now, good-night!
WAGNER. Much have I learnt already;
To know all I aspire.
FAUST. Aspire—and go!
[*Exit* WAGNER.
He never need despair who clings to trash.

There goes myself—as great a fool am I,
And when I flung those bitter words at him
'Twas at myself I railed. It seemed indeed
As if my past life mocked me in his words!
Dust, dust, and ashes!

[*He sinks dejectedly on a chair.*

Ah, that Spirit splendid!
He with a thunder word swept me away.
I am no god. Deep in my heart I feel it,
I am a worm beneath the wanderer's feet.
Grin on, thou skull! thy brain was once as mine.

[*Gazing around, his eye is caught by a gleaming flask.*

Why dost thou lure me so, thou gleaming goblet,
Drawing me like a magnet? Seeing thee
The stings of pain diminish, struggle ends.
The air glows now like moonlight in a forest,
I see a dreaming ocean and new shores.
Shall I unlock the one door left to me
And, draining this deep draught of slumber juices,
Venture on death, although I sleep for ever?
Come down, then, from thy shelf, thou flask of crystal.
How often at old banquets didst thou pass
From hand to hand, gladding the solemn guests!
Now to a neighbour never shall I pass thee.

Here is the deadly juice : I chose, prepared it.
Hail to the morn ! I drink my final cup.

[*He sets the cup to his lips when there is heard a chime of Easter Bells and a Choral Song.*

Christ is arisen !
Hail the joyful morn !
The tomb He hath broken,
Our bonds He hath shattered,
Death is defeated.

FAUST. [*Setting down the cup.*] I cannot drink : the ancient music holds me.
And the remembered bells of Easter morn.

CHORUS

Christ is ascended :
Bliss hath invested Him,
Our woe He hath ended.

FAUST. Once on my childish brow the Sabbath stillness
Fell like the kiss of Heaven : mystical bells
And prayer dissolved my yearning soul in bliss.
Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven ! ye sacred bells !
The old tear starts ! Earth has her child again.
[*A pause*
But I shall ne'er regain the ancient rapture,

When as a child I watched the sun recede
Firing the peaceful vales and mountain peaks,
And some eternal longing came on me
To flee away and up! as over crag
And piney headland slow the eagle soared,
And past me sailed the crane to other shores.
But now not only childhood shattered lies,
But manhood, too, is sold for a barren dream.
Ah! now those fleeting songs I would recall
Which I despised; the feast, the lips of women,
The brief yet luring hours all lost to me.
Only the cup is left.

[*He again takes the cup and again pauses.*

And yet, and yet,
One power I ne'er invoked I might invoke.
Seeking the Light I called not upon Darkness.
Spirit of Chaos, now to thee I turn.
The choice before me lies of Death or Hell,—
Death that leads on to sleep, or Hell that yields,
That riot of the blood my soul hath spurned.
I cry to God: the vacant Heavens are dumb;
He answers not. On Evil then I call.
I will not die; I'll risk the eternal woe
So I be rapt into the whirl of sense.
Ye elemental spirits four,
Fire and Water, Earth and Air,

From riven skies, from Ocean's floor,
I bid ye hither! Beware! Beware!
[*He raises the sign of the Hexagon.*
Salamander! by thy name
I call thee from thy haunt of flame,
Fair Undine, whose sea-worn home
Lies beneath the circling foam,
Sylph whose feet have found their way
Through the viewless fields of day,
And thou poor gnome who evermore
Art tied and tethered at Earth's core,
I here command ye! Yield unto my sight
From out the dusky cohorts of the night
The Spirit of the Dark who dreads the Light.
[*A flame leaps in the hollow of the chimney, and from the risen vapour that follows the flame the form of* MEPHISTOPHELES *gradually emerges.*
FAUST. What art thou? Speak!
MEPHISTOPHELES. A part of that fell power
Which ever seeking ill, yet makes for good.
FAUST. Some riddle doth lurk here! Yield up thy name.
MEPHISTOPHELES. My name? I am the Spirit that denies.

And wherefore not? For all created things
That are, are naught or should be turned to naught.
This whirling planet issuing from the void,
Teeming with empty life, I would consign
Unto the void once more. There where I ruled
A part of Primal night that knew no dawn—
Prince of the darkness that brought forth the light!
Now, all-conceiving, all-consuming Night
Hath lost her ancient place. The upstart Day
Disputes her throne. Yet not for ever so!
For Dawn and Day have but their place in Time,
And shall as surely yield that place again
When earth's poor spawn have spent their little hour
And timeless Night resumes her larger sway.
Meanwhile for lighter sport I tread the earth,
Tormenting those I may not yet destroy.

FAUST. Strange son of Chaos, now I know thee well.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Yet when all's said there's little left to boast of!
This poor blind mole o' the world, howe'er I shake it,

With flood or earthquake, storm and fire and plague,
Hath a dull way of settling down again
Most heart-breaking to one who loves his trade.
And even mankind, my latest perquisite,
Proves a poor plaything. Though I kill 'em off
Like flies in jelly, myriads at a stroke,
They breed again before my back is turned.
Then all's to do once more, a weary toil!
Look where I may there's naught but birth and life
From Water, Earth, and Air for ever teeming;
And were it not for a poor modest crib
Lit by a flick of flame that still is mine—
That last red rod in pickle down below—
I'd quit the business straight. But there, enough!
An egotist makes but a sorry devil,
So now for your commands!

FAUST. Nay, I have none;
My prayer half-uttered dies upon my lips.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Good Doctor, not so fast; ere night shall fall
We'll tread a merrier measure, you and I,
For see you here, I cast aside that garb,
Stitched in the nether world for working hours,

And stand revealed a gallant gentleman—
A part the Devil's very apt to play!
[*The dusky cloak falls from him, and he stands under a lightning flame in his dress of scarlet.*
Go swiftly, Doctor, find a worthy garb
To match this gay attire. Then, arm in arm
We'll sally forth from out this mouldy den
And look on life.

FAUST. Nay, that were all in vain;
No outward change can change this outworn world
Where every passing hour croaks but one cry:—
"Abstain, renounce, refrain, and for reward
Take the dried parchment of Life's withering law."
Such is the strain that echoes in men's ears
From waking dawn to phantom-haunted night,
Whose every dream is shattered by the day.
There is no cure but Death. I'll fight no more!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Yet death, too, has its drawbacks, so I've heard!

FAUST. Happy the warrior whose blood-stained brows
Death's marble fingers crown. Thrice happy he
Who, drunk with passion, on his lover's lips

Prints the last kiss and finds death waiting there.

MEPHISTOPHELES. And yet I know a Doctor hereabouts

Who grasped the cup but let the liquor go.

FAUST. You spied and saw me fail.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ah, Doctor, no!

FAUST. Where all is known 'twere vain to hide the truth.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I know a thing or two, yet not quite all!

FAUST. Cursed be the coward hand that held me back,

And cursed those winning strains of childhood born,

That snared my soul upon the edge of all!

A curse on life, honour, and wealth and fame,

Ambition's toils, the cheating gleam of gold,

And pomp and power—the empty spoils of war,—

A curse on all; aye, even the best of all,

The vine's ripe juice that brings the trance of love,

And love's brief ecstasy that turns to hate.

And last of all on man, that patient drudge

Who still endures what Death may fitly end.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Doctor, let me prescribe! For such a case

I know a sovereign cure! You wrong yourself
In tearing at a wound my arts may heal!
For think not I would thrust you midst the herd
Of common folk whose lot you rightly spurn.
No! While I'm here I move among the best,
Naught else would suit my quality. Trust to me
To guide you through life's maze, and you shall learn
This Earth can furnish unimagined joys
Of sense unfettered by the illiberal bonds
The haunting spirit forges for the flesh.
Now and henceforth through Time's unmeasured span
I'll be your comrade, servant, and your slave.
Shall that content you?

FAUST. What is thy reward
When this long service hath run out its course?

MEPHISTOPHELES. We'll call the reckoning when the feast is done.

FAUST. Nay, I would know the cost!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Then hearken, Doctor.
Till Time's unfathomed waters cease to flow
I'll stand beside thee at thy beck and call.
The Earth and all its countless joys are thine,
And I thy willing slave to serve the feast!

FAUST. And then?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Why, then I'll ask as much of thee.

What's here is thine, the all hereafter mine.

FAUST. That doth not fright me! When this shattered world

Thou hast cast into the abyss, what else may come

To fill the vacant void may count for naught.

Our hooded vision vainly seeks to pierce

What lies beyond the ruin of this Earth,—

Cradle and grave of every joy and pain

The soul hath sense to capture.—'Tis not that

Which bids my spirit halt.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Why then, good Doctor,

There's nothing left but just to close the bargain;

That done, I'll get to work, and with swift arts

Will yield thee such a harvest of sweet sense

As none have dreamed of yet.

FAUST. What canst *thou* know

Of joys the uplifted soul would seek to win?

The sordid sweets of sated appetite

Whose savour dies, untasted, on men's lips,

Like fruit that rots within the hand that grasps it,

Dead leaves that scatter ere the buds have burst :
I know them all !

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, be assured, good Doctor ;

I would not traffic in such damaged wares.
That were to lose all custom ! From this hour
With pleasures new for newly-born desire
Your cup of life shall bubble to the brim.

FAUST. If in thy boasted store of rich delights

Thou hast but one that is not linked with pain,
If from all Time one moment thou canst pluck
So rich in beauty that my soul shall cry
Tarry ! thou art so fair !—
Then shalt thou claim the immortal part in me !
Then let Time's beating pulses cease to stir :
The shattered hands upon the dial's face
Fling down into the dust : their use is gone,
And Hell itself shall toll the final hour.
So stands my challenge !

MEPHISTOPHELES. Count the bargain closed !
Yet ponder well ! The Devil hath a trick
Of not forgetting !

FAUST. Nor shall I forget !

MEPHISTOPHELES. But one thing more remains : we're formal folk !

One line of writing just to seal the bond!

FAUST. My soul is pledged, yet wouldst thou still exact
The feebler witness of this faltering hand!

MEPHISTOPHELES. An idle whim of mine which sometimes serves
To save dispute hereafter.

FAUST. Have thy way!

[MEPHISTOPHELES *produces a document.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. And for our present purpose we will choose
One drop of blood. See here! I prick the vein.

FAUST. Be it so. I am content!

MEPHISTOPHELES. And I content!

[MEPHISTOPHELES *punctures* FAUST'S *arm and hands him the pen.* FAUST *signs the parchment.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. I love that crimson stream: what's current here
Is of a different colour!

FAUST. Have no fear
Lest I should break the bond! My rightful place
Is henceforth by thy side. To plumb the depths
Of every earthly pleasure born of sense,
To win from life a world of new desire,

And quench desire in unimagined joys,—
Is all that's left to one who vainly sought
To win the secrets of the Universe.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Fall to, then, with a will; the table's spread
With every dish most cunningly devised!
But first we'll make an end of all this lumber
Of empty knowledge stored for empty heads!
No longer wield the flail on barren straw
That yields no wheat; nor seek to teach to youth
What age has failed to learn. There are fools enough
Wearing a Doctor's gown, whose addled brains
May well suffice to fill the addled brains
Of fools who seek to learn. Your freer soul
Deserves a richer diet.

[*Knock at door.*

Some one knocks.
One of your faithful students waits without!

FAUST. I have no heart to see him. Bid him go!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, he hath journeyed far; 'twere scarcely fair
To leave his famished brain without a meal!

Lend me your hood and gown, my wit may serve.
Meanwhile make ready for our wayfaring.

FAUST. Across the world!

[*Exit* FAUST.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Across the world to Hell!
I hold him fast and sure. That bolder spirit
That drove him upwards, onwards past those joys
Man may inherit here, shall prove at last
The rock to wreck his soul.

[*The knocking is repeated.*
Come in! Come in!

A STUDENT *enters*

STUDENT. Great Doctor, I have journeyed from afar
To set mine eyes upon the face of one
Whose fame spreads through the world.

MEPHISTOPHELES. You flatter me.
I'm but a simple man, or something more,
Or haply something less. It's hard to tell.

STUDENT. I'm all athirst for knowledge.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Happy youth!
You couldn't have done better than come here.

STUDENT. Yet, to confess a fault, these haunts of learning
Sometimes oppress me. Something in the air
Falls on my brain like lead.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay; that will pass!
The new-born child turns from its mother's breast,
Then turns again to take what it refused.
The paps of learning do not lure at first,
The rapture grows in feeding.

STUDENT. Thank you, Doctor!
I would in all be led by thy advice.

MEPHISTOPHELES. What is the special faculty you seek?

STUDENT. All fields of knowledge either in Earth or Heaven,
All secrets Science wrings from Nature's breast,—
These I would call my own!

MEPHISTOPHELES. 'Tis fortunate
You have made no larger choice! A prudent lad!
Yet even for this narrow course of study
Attention will be needed.

STUDENT. Body and soul
And all my life I freely consecrate
To this great task! Although in summer time

I own my spirit longs for summer joys.
Is that a fault?

MEPHISTOPHELES. No! that can be arranged.
Yet with this tendency, which think you not
I would condemn—that never was my plan,—
Perhaps 'twere wiser in the first, at least,
To take some special province.

STUDENT. Once I thought
To choose the Law; but now, I know not why,
My spirit turns from it.

MEPHISTOPHELES. And mine, sweet youth.
I own I have no liking for the Law,—
A rebel prejudice that haunts me still.

STUDENT. Your wiser words confirm me. If I may
I'll start my studies with Theology.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ah! that's my special subject! hold to that!
Its laws are simple, and its facts are sure.
Unlike those merely human fields of thought
Where men dispute, and rage in angry strife,
This study makes for peace—and when all's learned,—
Your spiritual belly crammed with creeds,—
And you shall come to teach the heavenly law,
See that you spice your list of punishments

That wait on evil-doers! Cite them all
As though the Devil stood beside your chair.
[*He hisses this in the* STUDENT'S *ear.*
STUDENT. Doctor, you frighten me.
MEPHISTOPHELES. Why so, my lad?
There's warrant for such teaching.
STUDENT. True; there is.
MEPHISTOPHELES. But come, a three years' course may well suffice
To sift the lumber of the centuries
Men call Theology. And after that?
STUDENT. I thought of Medicine.
MEPHISTOPHELES. A pretty thought,
Yet deem not that this ancient science dwells
In mouldy parchment. There's a shorter way
To reach to eminence. For true disease,
Death is your sole and sovereign remedy!
Leave all such cases to those meddling fools
Who seek to hinder Nature in her task.
But there's a world of women's maladies
That have one source, and only need one cure.
There you may win distinction. Tend them well!
In consultation always feel their pulse;
Look long into their eyes, for there it is
The symptoms show themselves. And now and then

It may be needful in the cause of science
To test the heart beneath a loosened bodice,
Or even to pass an arm about the waist
Just to discover if the corset strings
Are over-tightly drawn. These simple hints
Should serve to set a student on his way.
The rest is easy if you love your work.

STUDENT. Oh, thank you, Doctor; never until now
Has science seemed so plain; I almost wish
This very hour my studies might begin.

MEPHISTOPHELES. The fruit of knowledge hangs upon the tree
And only needs the plucking.

STUDENT. Ere I go
Here in my album pray you write one word.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Most willingly.

[*He writes and hands back the book, from which the* STUDENT *reads.*

STUDENT. "Be self-possessed and thou
Shalt own the world."

[*Exit* STUDENT.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Young hopeful should go far,
And maybe at the goal we'll meet again.

[*Enter* FAUST.

Ah, Doctor, so thou art ready! All the world
Lies spread beneath our feet.

FAUST. Yet in that world
The years that bow me down must keep me still
An exile from all joy.

MEPHISTOPHELES. That's swiftly cured!
There lies a cavern in the cloven earth
Where dwells a witch served by an apish brood
That are her slaves and mine. There, as she sits
Beside a cauldron that is ever seething,
She weaves a spell that yields to outworn age
The prize of youth. Straightway we'll journey there.

[*A roll of thunder.*

See, as I cast this garment round about thee
We are speeding on our way! The hills divide
As down the vacant highways of the dark
We sink in sudden flight. Above our heads
The circling eagle dwarfed to a dusky star
Soars o'er the moonlit world. Dost thou not feel
The rush of midnight air upon thy brows
As upward from the deep, in chorus chanting,
My subject spirits signal our approach?

CHORUS

Through shaken rocks that are rent and riven,
Across the fallow fields of night,
He drives his steeds as a flame is driven
From Deep to Deep in measureless flight.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Time cannot count the lightning lapse of time
Till we are there! Hark! we are nearing now.

CHORUS OF APES

Beside a cauldron ever brewing,
We weave a garment of earth and air,
The withered hide of age renewing
With wondrous tissues shining fair.

[*During the preceding speech of* MEPHISTOPHELES *and the accompanying* CHORUSES *the Scene fades and darkens, with only a glint of light upon the* TWO FIGURES *who stand at the side of the stage. At first the change is to a world of cloud and vapour, the effect at the back so contrived by the rushing, upward course of the clouds as to make it seem as though* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *were swiftly descend-*

ing. When the clouds finally disappear and reveal the Witches' Cavern, they are seen standing on a ledge of rock slightly raised from the stage.

[*The Scene should be designed to represent a hollowed cavern at the base of a deep, torn fissure in the earth. The* APISH FORMS *are grouped round a cauldron.*

FAUST. Why hast thou brought me to this filthy den?
The antics of this foul mis-shapen crew
Offend my spirit.

MEPHISTOPHELES. That's strange! they please me well!
Look where they frolic with that glowing ball
That sinks and rises o'er the savoury stew.—
What's that, my winsome puppet? Tell your story.

APE

The world's a ball
Shall rise and fall,
It soars like a star
Afar and afar!
Then falls and falls
As its master calls.

'Tis fashioned of clay
And shall last a day.
Hark! the word is spoken,
'Tis shivered and broken.
Away! Away!

[*He flings the orb to the ground and it breaks into fragments, upon which the* APE *and his* COMRADES *dance in revelry.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Where is thy mistress?

APE

Up and away
To the fields of day,
Gathering mice
And bats and lice,
With simples new
To feed our stew.

FAUST. What need to call on her?

MEPHISTOPHELES. What need to ask?
'Tis in thy service she is summoned here.

FAUST. If thou wouldst give me back my vanished youth,
This hag's foul witchery is nought to thee.
Canst not thy larger power weave the spell?

MEPHISTOPHELES. That power is naught which uses but itself.
The mightier spirit that conceives all ill,
Still needs all service to complete its task.
Since time began a myriad whirring looms
In varied hues of texture, ever changing,
Have wrought the constant pattern of man's fate.

APE

Hark, hark, and hark!
On the winds of the dark
As a plummet plumbs
To the water's floor
She comes, she comes!
She is here once more!

[*The cauldron suddenly boils over; a great flame leaps up, and the* WITCH *shoots down as though through a chimney in the rock.*

[*She seizes the ladle and threatens the* APES, *who scatter at her approach.*

WITCH. Ye damnéd crew, so this is how ye work!
Letting our precious pottage boil and spoil.

[*Turning to* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

And ye, what do ye here, accursed pair?
Let burning fire lick all your flesh away,
Consuming heart and brain.

[*She fills the ladle from the cauldron and flings the fire towards them.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Vile, filthy witch!
Dost thou not know thy master? At a word
I'll scatter thee and all thy antic brood
In countless fragments to the hissing flames.
So there! and there!

[*He seizes the ladle and smashes the goblets and pitchers that are piled around the cauldron.*

WITCH. [*Grovelling at his feet.*] Good master, pardon me.
In truth I did not see the cloven foot.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Umph! Well, of late I've chosen a neater shoe
That better suits the tripping courtly measure
I tread up there on Earth.

WITCH. Most noble master,
Would I had leave to call thee by thy name.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, not just now. I have some work on hand
That claims another title.

WITCH. Tell me, then,
How I can serve thee best?
MEPHISTOPHELES. My comrade here
Would like to taste that ancient brew of thine.
WITCH. You'll pay me for it?
MEPHISTOPHELES. On Walpurgis night
Ask of me what thou wilt, it shall be thine.
But mark you, of the best with age in bottle!
We want no third-rate vintage.
WITCH. [*Pointing.*] That was brewed
A thousand years ere yonder ape was born.
[*Whispering.*
Yet have a care, it either kills or cures,
There's no half measure.
MEPHISTOPHELES. I'll look after that!
I know his malady: he needs the drug.
So quickly to your craft, and when all's done
Fill up the glittering goblet to the brim.
WITCH. Come, then, make ready.
[*The* APES *gather round her in a circle, making their backs a reading desk for the great book she opens; then she turns to* FAUST.
FAUST. This poor jugglery
Was made for fools. I loathe its apish tricks
And would no more.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, patience! patience, Doctor!
The end is near, and while she weaves her spell
Look well in yonder hollow of the rock—
'Tis said that once ere Eden's lawns had flowered
The Mother of the Mother of the World
Lay hidden there.

[*The* WITCH *continues her incantations, and as she does so a* VISION *appears—a* VISION *of a* FIGURE *nearly nude, and draped by the growth of leaves about her form, in which she seems partly incorporate.*

FAUST. Wonderful form divine,
Pure primal mould of every separate charm
Created Nature owns. Oh, lend me, Love,
The swiftest of thy wings, that I may speed
To that enchanted bower wherein she lies!
Can this be mortal, or may mortal mate
With that celestial beauty?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, turn thine eyes;
The cup is ready, brimming to the full.
What's imaged there the world that waits thee holds
In myriad changing shapes, yet ever one.
See, now 'tis gone.

[*The* VISION *fades.*

FAUST. Ah, yield it back again.

MEPHISTOPHELES. The drink will yield thee all, for all lies there.

[*He holds the cup to* FAUST *as the* WITCH *pronounces the spell.*

WITCH

Here the shrunken skin of age
In the cauldron sinks and dies,
All the learning of the sage,
All the wisdom of the wise,
Count for naught beside what lies
Hidden in that magic brew.
Drink! and thou shalt feel the fire
Of youth renewed with pulses new,
Longings that shall never tire
Freshly born of fresh desire,—
All are there and all are thine,
Hidden in that magic wine.

[FAUST *sets the cup to his lips and then starts back as a flame leaps from it.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. A mate of mine and wouldst thou shrink at fire!
Drink deep and have no fear.

[FAUST *drains the cup. The Scene suddenly darkens. There is a crash of thunder, and then in a lightning flash* FAUST *appears richly clad with youthful face and form.*

WITCH. 'Tis done! 'Tis done!

[*With a wild shriek she leaps away, pointing towards* FAUST *who stands in shining light.* MEPHISTOPHELES *with a red glow upon his face, and the* WITCH *surrounded by her* ATTENDANT APES, *circle in a wild dance as the Curtain falls.*

CURTAIN.

ACT II

SCENE I

SCENE.—*An open square in a mediæval German city. On one side is a tavern with table set beside the door, round which a group of* STUDENTS *are seated, and with them one or two* SOLDIERS *in armour. On the other side are the steps of the Cathedral.*

[*The Scene opens with* STUDENTS' SONG.

SONG

Up, nightingale, and wake my dear,
Hi! Bird—Ho! Bird!
The lattice opens, thy love is near,
Hi! Bird—Ho! Bird!
Nay, who is that who clambers down?
'Tis the veriest knave in all the town,
But thy kiss hath cost him a broken crown
With a Hi! Bird—Ho!

[*A roll of the drum is heard off L.*

BRANDER. Enough of thy cracked tuning!

Dost not hear the drum which summons our comrades?

1ST SOLDIER. Truly 'tis time to join our troop.

FROSCH. Well, here's to all men of valour who go forth to war!

ALTMAYER. And to all valorous men who sit at home and sing of victory!

SIEBEL. Nay, in war-time your student counts for little, drink as deep as he may. I can boast it that I have as pretty a way with women as any man in all the city, yet have I been vilely deceived.

BRANDER. And look you where she goes with yon bearded warrior by her side!

ALTMAYER. Alack! 'tis true. Would I had been a soldier: it should have fitted me well.

BRANDER. Dost hear him? Why, old butter-tub, there is not enough steel in all Augsburg to make a case for thy belly.

ALTMAYER. Yet had I the wit to fall in battle, 'tis like I should win a maid's kiss at the last.

SIEBEL. Ay, when there was nought left of thee but a blown carcase beneath the moon.

ALTMAYER. Truly that must be thought of! When all's said, the wine-cup makes the safest kissing, and drink, not love, is your wiser beverage.

[A TROOP *of* SOLDIERS *enter, followed by a* CROWD *of* TOWN FOLK. *The* SOLDIERS *who had been drinking join them, and all move off to the sound of the drum.*

FROSCH. Is Valentine not among them?

SIEBEL. No, he's for the next troop—and, look you, here he comes!

ALTMAYER. Then here's a flagon for him, and for all, and at my account! We shall drink deep to serve him.

BRANDER. [*Looking off.*] Have a care, old waggle-tongue. He hath his sister Margaret with him, who loves not ribaldry.

ALTMAYER. Nay, then we'll drink deep but dumb.

[*There is a sort of hush upon the revellers as* VALENTINE *and* MARGARET *enter from R. above the revellers. The music is heard from the Church and* CITIZENS *pass behind them, ascending the steps of the Cathedral.*

MARGARET. Must you go now?

VALENTINE. I must, dear Margaret;
That beating drum forewarns me.
MARGARET. Then good-bye!
There'll be no hour I shall not think of thee,
No day at dawn I shall not pray for thee.
VALENTINE. And I, dear sister, shall for ever keep
Thine image next my heart. Once as I trudged
Across our snows in winter, all my thought
Sped backward to a little lonely flower
That decked the spring. So it shall be again!
Beneath War's thunder skies where'er I go
I'll think of thee the whitest flower of all.
[*The drum draws nearer.*
My troop draws near.
MARGARET. I cannot see thee go,
But there within, before the Virgin's shrine,
I'll pray that Heaven may yield thee safe once more.
Good-bye!
VALENTINE. Good-bye!
[*The music within swells as* MARGARET *enters the door, and at the same time the beating drum draws nearer.* VALENTINE *pauses on the steps of the Cathedral, looking*

" *after her. The revellers break out again in laughter.*

ALTMAYER. Come, Valentine, there's time and place for just one draught!

SIEBEL. And just one toast!

VALENTINE. Most willingly! Here's to you all!

ALTMAYER. And to thee, good Valentine; and a speedy return from the war with just wounds enough to win a tear from thy sweetheart.

FROSCH. Ay, name her to us! Thou hast kept her hidden till now. That shall be our toast.

VALENTINE. When I find her 'twill be time enough to name her. Sweetheart have I none. Such sport is for idle dogs who lag at home. A soldier's sweetheart is his sword.

ALTMAYER. Yet a toast there must be, else there's no cause for drinking.

BRANDER. [*To* VALENTINE.] Pray you take pity on him, poor soul, for he would fain drink.

VALENTINE. Well, then, here's to my sister Margaret; and he who has the worth to

win her shall then toast the purest maid in our city.

[*As they drink the* TROOP *comes on to the stage, and* VALENTINE *rises to join them.*

VALENTINE. Farewell, comrades! Have a care to leave just one bottle for my return.

BRANDER. 'Twill surely be no more than one, if old Altmayer lives so long!

[*Amid general laughter and shouting of farewell, the* TROOP *marches off,* VALENTINE *with them, to the sound of the drum.*

[*As the* SOLDIERS *go off and the* CROWD *disperses,* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *have entered and stand at the foot of the Cathedral steps.*

FAUST. There goes a gallant soldier to the war!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ay, to be spitted on a friendly pike
And so win death or glory, haply both.
In truth, good Doctor, 'tis most fortunate
That our first upward flight should land us here,
For in this little life is mirrored all.
Those weeping maids who whisper fond farewells

Shall, laughing, yield their lips unto another
Ere the day dies. So here in brief you see
Both love and glory, Life's twin fading dreams.
[*Pointing to Cathedral.*
And here are those who pray, then quit the shrine
To sin again that they may pray again,
Body and soul still chasing one another
Like kittens who would seek to catch their tails.

FAUST. [*Pointing to revellers.*] And there, what life is there?

MEPHISTOPHELES. The best of all.
Such wine-butts are your true philosophers,
Who neither pray, nor dream, nor fight, nor love,
But pass from cup to cup to life's last goal.

FAUST. Poor sodden fools! Is this in truth life's goal?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, not for thee. I do but show thee here
How mortals fare who lack the Devil's aid.
Our feast is better ordered. But meanwhile
We'll board these roisterers. Good morrow, sir!
[*To* FROSCH.]

SIEBEL. [*To* ALTMAYER.] Who are these gallants?

ALTMAYER. Nobly born, be sure,
For so their garments speak them.
BRANDER. Nobly born!
More like poor mountebanks who ply their trade
In borrowed plumes.
MEPHISTOPHELES. [*To* FAUST.] There are some folk, you'll find,
Who never know the Devil when they see him.
FAUST. Fair greeting, gentlemen!
SIEBEL. You come from far?
MEPHISTOPHELES. Lately from Spain, that land of wine and song.
ALTMAYER. Said I not so?
FROSCH. I'll board them, you shall see!
Didst chance to meet my noble cousin there?
MEPHISTOPHELES. Ay, the Court fool!
He had the same pork face,
And slobbered at the lips as thou dost now.
ALTMAYER. A shrewd stroke that! He had thee there, sweet Frosch!
Wouldst join us in a drink?
MEPHISTOPHELES. Your pardon, sir,
I only drink the best.
BRANDER. That's one for thee!
Our friend is set on drinking: if naught else,

The drippings from the counter will content him ;
So that it burns his throat, he hath no care
To name the vintage.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Time may come, perhaps,
When he shall find a liquor to his liking ;
I know the cellar where it waits for him.
Meanwhile, if so you please, we'll broach a cask
Of something worth the tasting.

ALTMAYER. Willingly !
Go, call the landlord.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, sir, let him be.
I own a richer store than he can boast of.
Give me a gimlet.

ALTMAYER. Yonder one there lies
Within that basket. Look you, noble sir,
We want no scanty sample just to taste,
But full and brimming measure.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Boring hole in table.*]
Give it a name.

ALTMAYER. I'm local in my cups and patriotic—
Rhenish for me !

FROSCH. Have you so many kinds?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Call what you will. I'm here to serve all tastes.

BRANDER. This is some juggler's trick.
MEPHISTOPHELES. A little wax
To serve as stoppers. Quick, old pot-belly,
That none be wasted. Now, good sir, your choice.
BRANDER. Champagne, if you can yield it.
MEPHISTOPHELES. [*To* FAUST.] Mark you that,
Your cultured patriot calls an alien brand
And fills his Prussian paunch with Gallic wine.
SIEBEL. I crave for something luscious!
MEPHISTOPHELES. Then for you
We'll broach this old Tokay. And you, good sir?
STUDENT. I'll name the vintage when I see it flow.
This knave doth fool us all!
MEPHISTOPHELES. Say you so?
Then draw the stoppers forth and drink your fill.
[*They hold their glasses and the wine flows.*
SIEBEL. Most wonderful!
ALTMAYER. This is a happy day.
MEPHISTOPHELES. Yet have a care no droppings from your glass——
[ALTMAYER *lets his glass fall and the wine turns to flame.*

ALTMAYER. Help! Help! The flames of Hell!

MEPHISTOPHELES. No, no!
A touch of Purgatory—nothing more.

[SIEBEL *has drawn another stopper and fire flies in his face.*

SIEBEL. He uses some vile magic. Out on him!

BRANDER. 'Tis witchcraft! Strike him down! We'll none of it!

[*They draw their knives on* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Snare their senses, close their eyes,
Bear them hence to Southern skies.

[*They draw back in a trance.*

SIEBEL. What land is this?

BRANDER. A land of milk and honey.

ALTMAYER. With luscious purple grapes on every bough.

BRANDER. [*Seizing* ALTMAYER'S *nose.*] Here hangs a glorious bunch that needs but cutting!

[*He puts his knife to* ALTMAYER'S *nose.*

FROSCH. And here another!

STUDENT. This is best of all!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Now see them change again, while 'neath this cloak
We stand invisible.

End their dream and ope their eyes,
Lead them back from Southern skies!

FROSCH. Why, what is this?
Where are those vines?

SIEBEL. In truth we've been bewitched.

BRANDER. [*To* ALTMAYER.] I took thy nose to be a purple grape.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] No wonder, for the vine hath painted it!

ALTMAYER. And so I deemed was thine.

SIEBEL. [*To* FROSCH.] And thine.

FROSCH. [*To* SIEBEL.] And thine.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] Poor fools! Begone! the Devil's jest is ended.

SIEBEL. Whither hath he fled?

ALTMAYER. Methought I saw him ride
Over yon steeple on a butt of wine.

BRANDER. Were the knave here, I'd cleave his head in twain!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] Go, braggart, ere I spit thee on a skewer.

FROSCH. Let's go within. There's something in the air
That freezes all my marrow.
ALTMAYER. Ay, within!
There's hiding in the cellar. Drink's the cure!
For witchcraft drink's your sovereign remedy.
[*They go into the house like men dazed. A laugh from* MEPHISTOPHELES.
FAUST. Let's quit the place; these drunkards sicken me.
[*Music from Church.*
MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, hark! the mass is ended. Wait awhile.
Prayer's a provocative and ofttimes sets
The senses newly itching.
[*They begin to stream out of Church.*
See you there
That buxom housewife on her husband's arm?
Last night she kissed the butcher 'neath the elm
That shades their garden patch. Yon prentice youth
With sheeplike eyes that ever seek the ground,
Can boast of more than his indentures warrant.
Ask of his master's daughter, she can tell thee!
And that pale priest who but an hour ago
Confessed a maiden who will ne'er confess

The thing she learnt of him,—see how his gaze
Would seem to mount toward Heaven!

[MARGARET *has come from the Church and stands at the head of the steps as she gives a flower to a child.* FAUST'S *gaze has been riveted upon her during the* DEVIL'S *speech.*

FAUST. Enough, enough!

[*He advances towards* MARGARET.

Fair lady, let me see you to your door?

MARGARET. I am no lady, sir, nor am I fair,
And have no need of escort on my way.

[*She passes across and off.*

FAUST. By Heaven, how beautiful! In all the world
Dwells not her equal. Fresh and sweet and pure
As the first flower of spring that greets the snow,
Yet with red lips that ripen for a kiss
Those downcast eyelids still refuse to yield.
Ah! could I win that maid!

MEPHISTOPHELES. What maid is that?

FAUST. She who but now passed by. Look where she goes.

Didst thou not see her shrink at my approach?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Oh, that young thing! She's lately from confession.

I stood beside her whilst the greasy priest
Absolved her of her sins, for she has none.
I would you had looked higher: these fledgling buds
Take far more plucking than a full-blown rose.

FAUST. There is no higher, nay, nor none so high.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] The scentless perfume of pure innocence
Works like a poison in the air I breathe,
Its very frailty saps all my powers.
[*To* FAUST.] I could have set the fairest at thy feet,
Disrobed an Empress but to serve thy sport,
Or sacked the centuries to yield thee back
Dead Queens whose beauty wrecked an elder world.
Yet with this feast outspread thou needs must choose
A wind-flower from the hedgerow. Think again!

FAUST. My choice lies there; naught else
I care to win.
Yield to my arms this image of delight
Or count our bargain ended.
MEPHISTOPHELES. Not so fast!
The thing needs time, that's all!—and strategy.
FAUST. Time! that's a mortal's plea: it
fits thee not.
It needs thy will—no more. Be swift and
sure.
Bear me some token that shall speak of her—
A kerchief from her breast,—I care not what!
Then lead me where she dwells——
MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, sir, not yet!
The day is still a-dying. When the moon
Peeps through her lattice—that's love's fitting
hour.
FAUST. Meanwhile I need some gift to
bear to her.
MEPHISTOPHELES. A good thought that!
The purest maiden's soul
Yields to the treacherous lure of glittering stones.
I know a hidden treasure hereabouts,
Left by a miser who went mad and died.
We'll pick and choose from out his buried
store.

[*As he speaks a* COMPANY *of* PRIESTS *come from the Church, the foremost bearing a cross, at sight of which* MEPHISTOPHELES *shrinks and cowers, half in fear.*

There's something here I like not. Come away!

SCENE II

SCENE.—*A small, neatly kept chamber*

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES, *beckoning* FAUST

MEPHISTOPHELES. Doctor, come on, but gently; follow me!

FAUST. [*After a pause.*] Leave me alone! Depart, I beg of thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Peering round.*] H'm! 'Tis not every girl keeps things so neat.

[*Exit.*

FAUST. O welcome twilight, soft and sweet, that fills
This virgin shrine! What peace and order breathe
Around me! In this penury what plenty,
And in this cell what bliss!

[*He draws aside the bed curtain.*

How am I thrilled!

Here could I pass long hours. Here Nature shaped
The angel blossom from the holy bud.
Ah, Faust, what dost thou here with heavy heart?
I who in lust's mere madness hither stole,
Now lie o'erwhelmed in the pure trance of love.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Returning.*] Quick! She is coming!

FAUST. I return no more!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Here is a casket not unserviceable;
It came from—somewhere else—quick, place it here!
The gewgaws stored within will turn her head.

FAUST. Ah, but I know not——Shall I?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ask you that?
Perhaps you'd keep the treasure to yourself.
I trust you are not growing avaricious;
If so, I beg you spare me further trouble;
I rub my hands in tender expectation.
[*Places casket in press.*
Now, quick! away! You'll have her at your pleasure;
And there you stand as in the lecture-hall—

You with a sweet young girl within your grasp,—
As grim as Physics and Metaphysics! Come!
[*Exeunt* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

Enter MARGARET *with lamp*

MARGARET. How close, how sultry here!
[*Opens window.*
And yet without
It is not warm.
[*Begins to braid her hair.*
I wonder who he was,
That gentleman I saw to-day. He seemed
Gallant and of a noble family.
Besides, he would not else have been so forward.
I tremble strangely, I am silly, timid—
Ah! but I wish my mother would come home!
[*She sings as she undresses herself.*

SONG

A king there lived in Thule
Was faithful till the grave,
To whom his mistress, dying,
A golden goblet gave.

Before all things he prized it,
He drained it at every bout,

The tears his eyes o'erflowing
Whene'er he drank thereout.

And when he came to dying,
His towns he reckoned up,
All to his heir he left them—
But not the golden cup!

He sat at the royal banquet
With his knights of high degree,
In the proud hall of his fathers,
In his castle by the sea.

There stood the old carousers!
As he drank life's parting glow,
He hurled the hallowed goblet
Into the surf below.

He watched it filling and sinking;
Deep into the sea it sank;
His eyelids closed, and never
Again a draught he drank.

[*She opens the press and perceives the casket.*
How comes this lovely casket here, I wonder!
I am quite sure I locked the press. How strange!
What can there be inside it? And a key

Hangs by a ribbon! I should love to open it!

[*She unlocks casket.*

Ah! what is this? Was anything ever like it?
Heavens! never in all my days have I seen
the like!
Why, ornaments and trinkets such as these
A noble lady might wear on holidays.
I wonder how this chain would suit my neck!

[*She steps before the mirror.*

Oh! were those earrings mine! At once they
give one
A different air. Youth, beauty are well enough,
But who cares? People praise one half in
pity—
But all depends on gold! Alas! we poor ones.

SCENE III

SCENE.—*Garden of Margaret's house*

[MARTHA *enters.*

MARTHA. [*Calling.*] Margaret! Alack! 'tis a hard fate to have lost a husband! Yet that might be borne; but to have no certainty of widowhood—why, 'tis enough to break the heart of any woman! No man hath a right to die unless he send home word he is decently buried. How else should his widow grieve for him in due fashion, or put away her weeds at the fitting time? Truth, 'tis a hard world!

Enter MARGARET, *agitated*

Ah! thou art there!

MARGARET. Oh, Dame Martha! Dear Dame Martha!

MARTHA. Why, what ails thee, child?

MARGARET. This morning, as I woke I found within my press this second casket like

unto the first, yet stored with richer gems. I know not what to do!

MARTHA. Then I'll tell thee. Say nothing to thy mother. She would but give them to the priest, as she did the last.

MARGARET. Look, how beautiful they are!

MARTHA. Oh, you're a lucky girl!

MARGARET. And yet I dare not wear them in the street.

MARTHA. Why, then we'll hide them, and now and then you shall put them on before the mirror. For the first let that content you. As time goes we'll choose some holiday when you may wear, perhaps, a chain or ring—then something more. Your mother will never know; or if she should, we'll forge some pretty tale of how you came by them.

MARGARET. Who could have brought them? I fear, yet know not why, that I do wrong to keep them.

MARTHA. Tut, tut, child! [*A knock.*

MARGARET. Is that my mother, think you?

[MARTHA *peeps through a little grille in the gate.*

MARTHA. No, 'tis some strange gentleman. Pray you walk in.

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Forgive me, ladies, but I sought for Dame Martha Schwartlein!

MARTHA. I am she, sir. May I enquire your errand?

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside to* MARTHA.] Nay, that can wait. I see you entertain a lady of quality. Another time shall serve.

MARTHA. Hear you that, Margaret? He takes thee for a lady!

MARGARET. Nay, sir, I am only a poor maid. These jewels have deceived thee. They are not mine.

MEPHISTOPHELES. No, I took no thought of the jewels. It was rather the look, the manner, the air, that struck me.

MARTHA. And now, sir, your business, if I may?

MEPHISTOPHELES. I would I had a cheerier note to sound. Your husband's dead and sends you loving greeting.

MARTHA. Dead! O dear, true heart! My husband dead! Then I must needs die too!

MARGARET. Courage, dear Martha!

MEPHISTOPHELES. I feared the shock. A very piteous case!

MARGARET. Indeed 'tis terrible! What use is love when death can shatter all! I would choose to die unwed.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Yet joy follows swiftly on the heels of woe. That's life!

MARTHA. Tell me, I pray you, how he met his end?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Very prettily, Madame. He lies in Padua beside St. Antony. A very cool and comfortable grave in consecrated ground. A temperate home for one who loved his glass!

MARTHA. Were there no last words?—no message for his fond and loving wife?

MEPHISTOPHELES. He did command thee to buy three hundred masses to save his soul.

MARTHA. And sent the wherewithal? Good, generous heart! A very worthy man!

MEPHISTOPHELES. No, Madame, no! He must have clean forgot it.

MARTHA. What, not a trinket even? Was there no little hoarded fund to leave to his wife?

MEPHISTOPHELES. True penitence was all he died possessed of. His cash he had expended on himself. A very worthy man!

MARTHA. Worthy, forsooth!

MARGARET. Day and night I'll pray for his soul, dear Martha!

MEPHISTOPHELES. So pitiful a lady should well deserve a husband of her own.

MARGARET. I dream not yet of that, sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Well then, let's say some gallant to love and cherish. There's nothing makes life sweeter.

MARGARET. 'Tis not our custom here.

MEPHISTOPHELES. And yet it sometimes happens so, I'm told!

MARTHA. Pray you, sir, and at the last?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ay, he much desired that all his sins against his wife might be forgiven.

MARTHA. Poor soul, he was forgiven long ago!

MEPHISTOPHELES. And yet, he added, "She was the more to blame."

MARTHA. Oh, what a liar! On his death-bed too!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Maybe his mind was wandering at the close. "I had no home," he said, "no peace, no quiet." Those were his very words. 'Twas sad to hear him.

MARTHA. And I who slaved so hard to make him happy!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ah! he didn't speak of that. It seems that after he left his home, he made a bit of money by fair means or foul.

MARTHA. We will not judge too strictly of the means. Where think you he hath hidden it?

MEPHISTOPHELES. 'Twere hard to tell. He told me that in Naples, where he was friendless, a fair young maid had taken pity on his hard case. They're sometimes costly, those fair young pitiful maids.

MARTHA. The villain! Oh, the villain! He was ever a shameful man! Wine and dice and—— You understand me, sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Perfectly, Madame. Mourn him for a year, and meanwhile keep a sharp lookout to find another.

MARTHA. Oh, I couldn't, sir! I could never love again!

MEPHISTOPHELES. A hopeless case, eh? A pity! Otherwise I should be almost tempted——

MARTHA. Oh, sir, you're not in earnest!

[*Approaches him.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Umph! I'd best make

off, or, who knows, she might take the Devil at his word! [*Turning to* MARGARET.] What's in your thought, fair lady?

MARGARET. I know not, sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Sweet innocent! Ladies, farewell!

MARTHA. One moment, sir! Perhaps 'twere wiser, in view of what you've said, that this death should be duly attested.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I had thought of that. A noble friend of mine who travels with me, can add his deposition. I'll bring him here.

MARTHA. Oh, do sir, pray!

MEPHISTOPHELES. A very gallant youth, and noble too. [*To* MARGARET.] All ladies love him!

MARGARET. I should not know how to greet so great a lord!

MEPHISTOPHELES. There is no king thou art not fit to greet.

[*Door opens at a gesture from* MEPHISTOPHELES, *and* FAUST *appears.*

MARTHA. Here in this garden this evening we'll wait you here.

SCENE IV

SCENE.—*A garden*

Enter FAUST *and* MARGARET

MARGARET. Ah, sir, but I know you are only trifling with me! You put up with me, as travellers do, out of good nature. How can I hope to entertain you who have seen the great world?

FAUST. But a glance, but a word from you, is sweeter to me than all the wisdom of the world. [*He kisses her hand.*

MARGARET. How can you bring yourself to kiss a hand like mine, so coarse and hard? But then I am obliged to—— Well, mother is really too close.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MARTHA *and* MEPHISTOPHELES

MARTHA. So you, sir, are always travelling about hither and thither?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Alas! business and pleasure! And many a place one regrets to leave, yet one cannot stay.

MARTHA. In the wild years of youth, of course, to move about is well enough; but the evil day must come, and then to sneak into one's grave a solitary old bachelor—that cannot be right for any one.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I shudder at the mere prospect.

MARTHA. Then think better of it, sir, while there is time.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I am beginning to already.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter FAUST *and* MARGARET

MARGARET. Ah yes! Out of sight, out of mind! It is easy for you to be polite; and you have many friends more sensible than I am.

FAUST. People one calls sensible are more often only mean and narrow-minded,—but you!

MARGARET. Will you think of me, then, just for one brief moment? Ah! I shall have time enough to think of you!

FAUST. You are alone a great deal?

MARGARET. Yes; our household is small, but one must look after it. We keep no maid; everything falls to me. I must cook, knit, sweep and run here and there—and mother is so particular. Not that there is such great need to stint. However, just now my days are passably quiet. My brother is a soldier. I had a little sister, but she died. I loved her so much.

FAUST. If she was like you, an angel!

MARGARET. My mother lay so ill, she could not suckle the poor little mite; so I brought it up with milk and water. It thus became mine; on my arm and on my bosom it smiled and sprawled and grew.

FAUST. What a pure joy for thee!

MARGARET. Ah yes! indeed.
Yet many an anxious time. Beside my bed
Its cradle stood; and if it merely stirred
I was awake to soothe it ere it cried!
And then for many an hour, night after night
I'd pace the room, warming it next my breast
Till sleep should come again.

FAUST. Oh, gentle heart!
Hast thou forgiven me yet?

MARGARET. Forgiven thee?

FAUST. Ay, for those downcast eyelids as I came
Told me thou hadst not forgotten.
MARGARET. Did they so?
Why then, sir, it was true!
FAUST. I did thee wrong
To stay thee on the threshold of the Church;
Yet 'twas thy beauty made me over-bold.
MARGARET. I'll own it hurt me, at the first, to think
I might have given thee warrant.
FAUST. Nay, 'twas I
Who dared too much!
MARGARET. And yet, I know not why,
I could not be as angry as I would!
Something there was within me still would plead
For thee against myself; till I felt sore
I was not sore with thee.
FAUST. Thou hast forgiven me!
[*They go up and off, hand in hand, as*

Re-enter MARTHA *and* MEPHISTOPHELES

MARTHA. Ah! it is not so easy to convert an old bachelor—but I should not call you old!

MEPHISTOPHELES. I am getting on, you know; but it only needs some one like you to teach me better.

MARTHA. But tell me, sir, have you never felt an inclination for any one?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Well, I am very difficult to please. I am more attracted by the soul than the body.

MARTHA. Of course, good looks are not everything.

MEPHISTOPHELES. But I am rather partial to the plump.

MARTHA. And your heart has never been really touched?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Not yet; and yet you would hardly believe the variety of women I have come across here—and there. Charming, I assure you: I have always been at home to them. I wonder if it is too late for me to be constant to one?

[*He puts his arm round her.*

MARTHA. It is growing dark.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Yes, we must be going.

MARTHA. I would ask you to stay here longer, but you have no notion what a place this is for scandal.

MEPHISTOPHELES. It can't be worse than the place I come from.

MARTHA. Is that very far away, sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES. A good distance, but they make the journey there as comfortable as possible.

MARTHA. I have to be most careful here, I assure you. If I were to be seen alone with you it would be news everywhere in the morning.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Surely they wouldn't mind —if they knew who I was!

MARTHA. Yes; but you see they don't. They would suspect you.

MEPHISTOPHELES. How extraordinary! I would not compromise you for the world.

MARTHA. And besides, I would not trust myself with you for long.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I assure you you need have no fear.

MARTHA. And our love-birds—where are they?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Flown up the garden path—naughty butterflies!

MARTHA. He seems fond of her.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Of course, and she of

him. Ah, dear lady, it is the way of all flesh!

[MEPHISTOPHELES *and* MARTHA *pass out by the upper path as* MARGARET *comes lightly down from the gate.*

MARGARET. Now ere he comes——

[*She plucks a star flower as* FAUST *follows her.*

FAUST. [*Aside.*] And wouldst thou hide again?
Nay, but I have thee now!

MARGARET. I'm half afraid
To put thee to the test; yet so I will!

[*She begins to pull the leaves.*

He loves me—loves me not! . . .

FAUST. What's in thy thought?
To bind a nosegay ere the sun be down?

MARGARET. No! 'Tis a foolish sport that children love!

FAUST. Teach me that sport.

MARGARET. Thou wouldst but laugh at me.

[*She moves away.*

He loves me not!—he loves me! . . .

FAUST. Angel soul
Thou need'st not slay a flower to tell thee that.

MARGARET. Nay, wait! there's more to come. He loves me nŏt!—
And now the last!—He loves me!

[*She drops the last petal to the ground as he takes her in his arms.*

FAUST. Aye, he loves thee!

[*She sinks on his breast as he kisses her.*

Lord of the world, for so in truth I am
In owning thee: there is nought else to win.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *has peeped in at the garden gate during the last speech.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Lord of the world, I fear 'tis time to go!

SCENE V

SCENE.—*An interval, during which the orchestra plays a stormy melody, gradually subsiding and ending in a peaceful strain reminiscent of the Chorus of Easter Angels which in Act I. prevented* FAUST *from taking his life. The Curtain then rises on a desolate scene of strewn boulders, black pines, and a lurid sun setting.*

[FAUST *is discovered lying prone on the earth: slowly he raises himself.*

FAUST. Spirit Sublime! thou hast given me what I asked.
Hither have I retired to Nature's breast
To ease me of this fever. Here to lose
Mid air and water and the silent wood
My wild unrest. Whatever stirs the bush
Or wings the air or troubles the dark pool,
With these am I acquainted. Thou hast given
No cold amazéd knowledge of thyself,

But hast revealed thy countenance in fire.
Alas! yet nothing perfect comes to man!
Thou hast assigned me as a comrade one
Who cancels with a sneer thy loving-kindness
And ever fans within my heart a flame
Unwearied for one fair, delicious form.
I fly from her, but ever would return.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES

MEPHISTOPHELES. Have you not led this life now long enough?
The wilderness awhile, but not for ever.

FAUST. Find other work: to plague me thou returnest.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Thou sitt'st here like an owl: or like a toad
From sodden moss thy nourishment deriving.

FAUST. I find a pleasure in the wilderness.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Enough of this! Yonder, alone, she sits;
Her thoughts and yearnings all go out to thee,
And miserably long the hours delay.
She haunts her window, pacing to and fro,
Watching the clouds roll off the city wall.
Now she is lively, but more often sad—
Sad, sad and mad for thee.

FAUST. Serpent, be still!
MEPHISTOPHELES. Ah! do I trap thee now?
FAUST. Bring not again
Desire of that white bosom to my mind.
I envy even the body of the Lord
When touched by her sweet lips.
MEPHISTOPHELES. Back to her then!
FAUST. No! no! I will no more assail her peace;
She shall return to her old simple life,
Take up again the tranquil tasks of home.
MEPHISTOPHELES. Fool! She shall ne'er recover that old peace;
She cannot now return to simple tasks.
FAUST. Cannot?
MEPHISTOPHELES. She hath seen thee.
FAUST. Am I so vile
That sight of me hath shattered all her peace?
MEPHISTOPHELES. Thou art her only peace: return to her;
Never can she be glad but on thy breast.
FAUST. All this may be; but I'll return no more.
If I have troubled so her serene days,
I trouble them no more. Have I disturbed

Her virgin soul, then I no more disturb it ;
I leave her.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Leave her now ? Is that quite fair ?

You bring the trouble, then refuse to ease it.
Go back to her.

FAUST. What wouldst thou have me do ?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Finish what is begun.

FAUST. Away, thou pimp !
I'll not seduce her body and her soul !

MEPHISTOPHELES. Her soul thou hast seduced—why hang on here ?

She is no longer virgin in her thoughts,
Thou hast corrupted every wandering whim.
Think you she lieth now so still of nights ?
She turns in darkness to the form of thee
And round thy image throws her burning arms.
What is the body's touch between you two ?
Now her imagination is deflowered :
Thou hast defiled her, Faust, for evermore.

FAUST. Ah no ! Ah no !

MEPHISTOPHELES. The only recompense
Is now to sate the craving thou hast waked ;
To-night !

FAUST. To-night !

MEPHISTOPHELES. Aye, sir, the silvering moon
Heralds the dawn of love. Yet have a care!
Her mother sleeps but lightly! This shall serve
To smooth her restless pillow.

FAUST. [*Taking phial.*] What is here?

MEPHISTOPHELES. A sweet decoction that shall swiftly link
Sunset and dawn in one.

FAUST. Not poison?

MEPHISTOPHELES. No!
Sleep is no poison though it last for ever.

FAUST. Then let us both in ruin fall together,
And one damnation quickly seize us both.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Now Hell seethes up in her again. Away
Into her room, and leave it not till dawn.

SCENE VI

SCENE.—*Margaret's garden*

[MARGARET *spinning in the doorway.*

MARGARET

Gone is my peace, and with heart so sore
I shall find it again nevermore.
If he be not near me, the world is a grave
And bitter as is the sea-wave.
Ah! my poor brain is racked and crazed,
My spirit and senses amazed!
Gone is my peace, and with heart so sore
I shall find it again nevermore.
At the window I stand only to greet him,
I leave the house but to meet him.
Ah! the smile of his mouth and the power of his eye,
And his noble symmetry!
What a charm in his speech, in his touch what bliss!
The rapture of his wild kiss!

My bosom is aching for him alone—
Might I make him my very own!
Might I kiss but his lips till my mouth were fire,
And then on his kisses expire!

Enter FAUST

Ah, dearest! thou hast been so long away,
I almost feared. . . . What it would be to lose thee
Thou know'st not!

FAUST. [*Kissing her.*] Margaret, once more I am happy.
I fled away into the wilderness
To commune with my God. I lived alone
With mighty trees and waters and wide air,
With wild and winged things, creatures and birds;
But all availed not. Oh, the very desert
Was haunted by thee; solitudes were filled
Suddenly with thy presence, silences
Murmured thee in my ear. From thee to fly
Is but to bring thee doubly near to me.

MARGARET. And I all day lonely at yonder window
Have stood, and listened for a single step;

Now would I fall to singing, now would cease,
Now took my work up, and now set it down ;
And now I loved in rapture, now in gloom.
Ah ! leave me nevermore.

FAUST. Nay, nevermore.

MARGARET. Oh ! the deep bliss descending on me fast,
Like steady rain on an unfolding flower.
Yet one thing troubles me.

FAUST. What troubles thee ?

MARGARET. Dearest, dost thou believe ?

FAUST. In what

MARGARET. In God.

FAUST. Darling, who dares say "I believe in God" ?

MARGARET. Oh ! but we must !

FAUST. I feel the living God
Trembling in starlight, surging in the sea,
And rushing by me in the wind ; I feel Him
Approach me close in twilight without word.
He shakes my soul with thunder—oh, to feel
It all ! I have no single name to give it—
Bliss, Love, God, what you will, the name is smoke
Obscuring all the serene glow of Heaven.

MARGARET. And, dear, long has it been a grief to me
To see thee in such company.
FAUST. How so?
MARGARET. Thy comrade, who is ever at thy side;
His face with a deep horror fills my soul,
And my heart shudders at his voice.
FAUST. Yet why?
MARGARET. I know not; but believe me I can tell
He is not a good man. O God forgive me
If I speak ill of any; but I feel
He is not good. I am so happy here,
So yielding and free, and warm upon thy arm,
But if his face peer round the garden wall
I am struck cold, and cannot love, or pray.
But I must go.
FAUST. Ah! will there never come
A quiet hour when we two, heart to heart
And soul to soul may cling; when we two may
Drive down the stream and headlong greet the sea,
The full ocean of bliss?
MARGARET. Now am I thine

So wholly, thine in every thought and hope,
In my outgoing and returning, night
And day, by sunlight or by moonlight thine;
So utterly am I given o'er to thee
In spirit, that what else thou dost desire
Can have no strangeness in it, only bliss.
I have yielded—then do with me what thou wilt.

FAUST. Oh, if to-night——I burn for thee!

MARGARET. And I
For thee!

FAUST. To-night then!

MARGARET. If I slept alone
I would undraw the bolt for thy desire;
But mother sleeps so light of late, and if
She should discover us I could but die.

FAUST. Thou angel, fear it not. Here is a phial:
Pour but three drops into her sleeping cup
And she will sleep on deeply thro' the night.

MARGARET. It will not harm her: thou art sure?

FAUST. Would I
Give it if there were danger?

MARGARET. O belovéd,

I can refuse thee nothing thou dost wish,
I will refuse thee nothing. I will open
That window when she is fallen quite asleep;
Listen for that — and then I'll unlock the door.
How heavy come the roses on the air
To-night! Kiss me—I must go in.

[*He kisses her passionately.*

FAUST. 'Tis hard
To part but for a moment.

MARGARET. Only wait!

[*She goes into the house. As* FAUST *stands expectant, the door of the garden opens and* MEPHISTOPHELES *appears.*

FAUST. Who's there?

MEPHISTOPHELES. A friend.

FAUST. A fiend!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Ay, both in one!

FAUST. Monster, begone!

MEPHISTOPHELES. I have no need to stay,
My work is done.

[MARGARET'S *hand is seen opening the lattice as* FAUST *makes a threatening gesture to* MEPHISTOPHELES.

Softly! The rest is thine!

[FAUST *halts: his eyes turn toward the cottage, the door of which slowly opens.* FAUST *is drawn towards it. He looks back as he enters.*

FAUST. And thine!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*As the door closes on* FAUST.] Ay, truly thine and mine in one!

ACT III

ACT III

SCENE.—*Outside the Cathedral, with Martha's house to R. The nave and choir of the Cathedral set across the stage, leaving space for a narrow street that runs up stage between it and Martha's house. Down stage L.C. a fountain. Above it, beside a buttress in the Cathedral wall, stands an image of the Virgin. It is close upon Vesper time, and a group of* GIRLS *are gossiping by the fountain as they fill their pitchers.*

[ELSA *enters down street R.*

ELSA. Hast heard the news?

LAINE. Old Katrine's cat is dead!

LISBETH. We heard that yesterday.

1ST GIRL. Ay, that's no news!
At dawn the cobbler slit his thumb in twain
In mending Sach's shoe!

2ND GIRL. I saw it done.

LISBETH. Hast thou nought else to tell?

ELSA. In truth I have!
A mighty throng is gathered in the Platz,
'Tis cried the war is ended, and to-day
Our troops draw toward the city.
LISA. News indeed!
Then Valentine comes with them?
ELSA. At their head!
He hath won such glory that he now returns
As captain of his band!
LAINE. Poor Margaret!
I wonder hath she heard?
LISA. 'Tis likely not,
For since her mother's death three months gone by,
She seldom goes abroad.
LAINE. Both day and night
The shuttered windows of her house are closed,
And there she sits alone.
LISA. 'Twas late last night
I had tended poor old Anna who lay sick,
And as I hurried homeward, here she stood,
Filling her pitcher 'neath the darkened moon
Whilst all the city slept!
LAINE. I'll go to her;
Her brother's home-coming will cheer her heart.
LISA. Hush! here she comes.

[MARGARET *enters and sits wearily on the edge of the wall.*

LISA. Dear Margaret, hast thou heard
The war is at an end?

MARGARET. Hither as I came
They cried the news along our narrow street.

LAINE. And Valentine returns a captain now!
Shall that not make thee glad?

MARGARET. I must be glad
That he is safely home.

LISA. Not every girl
Can boast so proud a brother.

LISBETH. Some there are
Who are lucky to have none!

LISA. Ay, true enough!

LISBETH. 'Twould be no joy for Mistress Barbara
Had she a brother homeward bound to-night.

LAINE. Nay, nor for him who brought her to this pass.

LISBETH. The fault was hers, not his! No man's to blame
Who takes the gift a wanton flings to him.

MARGARET. [*Clinging to* LAINE.] What is it that they say?

LISBETH. Dost thou not know?

MARGARET. I've been too much indoors for three months past,
I have heard nothing but the bell that tolls
From hour to hour.

LISBETH. Oh, 'tis a pretty story!
But now she's got her due, and serves her right.
What else could she expect? Both day and night
She hung upon his kisses. Now she knows
What comes of too much kissing.

MARGARET. Oh, poor thing!
But is it so indeed?

LISA. Indeed it is!

LISBETH. Ask through the city! Every gossip's tongue
Is wagging of her shame. Why pity her?
Whilst honest girls would sit at home and spin
She'd steal away o' nights to meet her swain,
Who leaves her for reward a sinner's shift.

MARGARET. Nay, surely he will take her for his wife?

LISBETH. Not he! And who can wonder? There are more
Like proud Miss Barbara who only wait

Till he shall have a mind to kiss again.
He'll meet them on his journey.

MARGARET. Has he gone?
Oh, 'tis not fair!

LISBETH. Why, think you he would wed
A maid who could not wait to claim a ring?
Not he! Come, girls, 'tis late, and I've no mind
To furnish food for gossips!

1ST GIRL. Nay, nor I!

[*They take up their pitchers and move off in different directions.* MARGARET *is left weeping.* LISA, *who is just going out, returns to her.*

MARGARET. Poor Barbara!

LISA. Dear Margaret, grieve not so!
Thy gentle heart is all too pure to know
The sin that tempted her. Yet thou canst weep
While others speak in scorn!

MARGARET. Oh, leave me—go!

LISA. See then, I'll take the pitcher to thy door
And come again for thee!

[LISA *goes out.*

MARGARET. In days long flown

I too have scorned each sinner as she fell!
Sure of myself, there were no words too hard
To paint the thing I deemed I ne'er could be—
The thing I am to-day—a living sin!
And yet—and yet—that one who drew me down
Seemed then, dear God, so true, so good, so dear!

[*She throws herself at the feet of the Virgin.*

O Mother of all sorrows, thou alone
Canst pierce my sorrow; thou alone canst cure
The ceaseless pain that bows me to the earth.
The prayer I dare not utter thou canst hear!
And those vain tears that washed thy stainless feet
Night after night, hast thou not seen them fall?
I have no help but thee! no hope but here.
As thou wert once a maid, be pitiful,
Take in thy hands my breaking, bleeding heart
And save my ruined soul from death's last stain.

[*There is a pause. The organ sounds from the Church, the windows of which show the candle-light within. A few* CITIZENS *come from L. and enter the porch. They are followed by* LISA.

LISA. Dear Margaret, you are weary. Let us go.

MARGARET. Ay, let us go within. Lend me your hand ;

To-night we'll pray together, if I may !

[*As* LISA *supports her into the Church,* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *come down the dark alley from the right.* MEPHISTOPHELES *peeps round the angle of the Church and sees* MARGARET.

FAUST. Who was it entered there ?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Some aged crone

With crooked, twisted limbs — no dish for thee.

FAUST. I thought 'twas Margaret !

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, that lonely bird

Sits in her wicker cage waiting for him

Who clipped her wings.

FAUST. Why, then I'll go to her !

MEPHISTOPHELES. What ! doth that poorer fancy still endure ?

Doctor, you shame my trade ! For this mean feast

The merest prentice pander might have served !

Have I not cured you yet ? What find you there ?

FAUST. A fluttering flower that lures me like a star.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I love them not,—these flowers that scent the air
I was not born to breathe. In these past months
Since first that bud was plucked, we have seen the world.

FAUST. Ay! and not once her equal in the world.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay! there are worlds on worlds unfolded yet
Whose treasured store of beauty still awaits us.
As children strew the hedge-blooms they have gathered
Along the dusty highway—cast her off
And let us on our road.

FAUST. There is no road
That leads not back to her.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Well, as you will!
Meanwhile I have some business of my own
That needs my presence here.

FAUST. I need thee not!

[*Exit* FAUST.

MEPHISTOPHELES. This comedy must end, and swiftly too.

Beside that purer soul my spirit flags;
I have no scythe to shear a harebell down,
Its weakness masters me. Till that hour come,
When all engulfed in sin she sinks and drowns,
My power is powerless. Once that hour is past,
Then, Faust, thou art mine again!

[*Music heard from Church.*

She kneels within
Yet knows not how to pray. I'll go to her.
Unseen, yet seeing all, beside her chair
I'll breathe a whispered poison in her ear
Shall draw her soul down to the verge of Hell.

[*As he speaks the stage darkens and the wall of the Church becomes transparent, showing the dimly-lit interior where* MARGARET *kneels among the worshippers,* MEPHISTOPHELES *bending over her. The opening lines of the Latin hymn are being chanted.*

CHORUS

Dies Irae dies illa
Solvet saeclum in favilla.

MEPHISTOPHELES. It is not with thee now as once it was,

When as a prattling child those innocent lips
First learned by rote the words of Holy Writ
From out the well-worn book thy mother held.

MARGARET. I cannot pray! Across my darkened soul
Hither and thither in a tangled flight
Come thoughts that drag me down.

CHORUS

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Where tends thy thought?
What hidden crime within thy bosom dwells?
Wouldst pray for mercy on thy mother's soul,
Who slept nor woke again through thee! through thee!
Her blood lies at thy door.

CHORUS

[*With third verse.*]

MARGARET. Oh, woe is me!
I dare not look toward Heaven: the gate is shut,

My heart sinks to the dust.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Beneath thy breast
Canst thou not feel the pulse of that new life
That stirs and quickens there? Dost thou not know
Whither thy sin shall drive thee?

CHORUS

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Cum vix justus sit securus?

MARGARET. Oh! no more!
The pillars close me in; the roof falls down
To crush me to the earth. I cannot breathe!
Dear Mary Mother, turn thy face once more.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Her face is turned away, she heeds thee not;
The light of Heaven goes out.

MARGARET. [*To* LISA.] Thy cordial! Oh!

[MARGARET *half swoons as, with the final repeat of the* CHORUS, *the vision fades and the exterior view of the Cathedral is restored. In the darkness* MEPHISTOPHELES *creeps stealthily from the door*

and is about to go off as ALTMAYER *and* OTHERS *enter R. He hides behind a buttress.*

ALTMAYER. They've reached the city! We'll drink deep to-night.

1ST STUDENT. [*To* FROSCH, *who comes with* OTHERS *down the alley.*] Where are they now?

FROSCH. Within the Western gate.

ALTMAYER. And Valentine?

FROSCH. He marches at their head.

ALTMAYER. That serves as fit occasion for our cups.

FROSCH. The crowds draw round him shouting Victory!

But he, scarce heeding them, still presses on
To greet his sister Margaret.

[BRANDER *and* SIEBEL, *with* OTHERS, *have entered L.*

BRANDER. Say you so?
Why, then he hath not heard?

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] Nay, sirs, not yet!
The Devil takes his time.

FROSCH. What should he hear?

BRANDER. The sorriest news, if what is said be true.

SIEBEL. Ay! and the foulest slander if 'tis false,

As here upon my soul I vouch it so.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] Be thrifty with your soul; you have but one.

BRANDER. To-night 'tis whispered that her mother's death

Came not at Nature's call. Within her room

A poisoned phial was found.

FROSCH. Is that enough

To brand as murderess the gentlest maid

That dwells within our city?

SIEBEL. Nay, there's more;

So slander grows on slander! Now 'tis said

She slew her mother to conceal her sin.

STUDENT. Oh, shame! I'll not believe it!

2ND STUDENT. Nay, nor I!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Aside.*] The world grows charitable! No fault of mine!

SIEBEL. Is there one here who would dare breathe this lie

To Valentine her brother?

VOICES. Nay, not one!

SIEBEL. If this foul gossip needs must reach his ears,
It shall not be through us.

Enter STUDENT

Well, sir, what now?

1ST STUDENT. The Burgomaster with the city guard
Keep watch on Margaret's house.

2ND STUDENT. Ay, and 'tis said
A warrant's out against her.

SIEBEL. Nay then, friends!
At such a time 'tis fit that we who love her
Should speak on her behalf.

ALL. Ay, so we will!
[*They go off L.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Oh, faithful hounds! before the dawn is here
Your tongues shall learn to sound another note.

Enter FAUST

What, Doctor, back so soon?

FAUST. She is not there;
The house is closed; there is no light within;
I have sought her through the city all in vain.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Have you no tidings of her?

FAUST. Ay, the worst! The whisper grows against her. Every tongue Breathes slander on her name.

MEPHISTOPHELES. I feared as much! Some gossip hath made mischief. Gossips will. Doctor, we'd best make off.

FAUST. No, I will stay Till I have seen her face, and at her feet Have prayed for pardon.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Well, I'm still your slave. An ancient pet of mine dwells hereabouts;

[*Striking his guitar.*

These strains may wake her; she is still romantic; We'll gather news of her.

FAUST. I care not how, So that these eyes may greet her once again.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Doctor, to-night I'm in a frolic mood And, like some old Tom cat upon the tiles Who stalks his love behind each chimney-stack, I'll thread this alley, mewing as I go!

[*They go off and up, the Song dying away as shouts are heard and*

[*The* CROWD *enters*, VALENTINE *marching through them at the head of his* TROOP *amidst the shouts of the multitude.*

VOICES. All hail to Valentine!

VOICES. All hail! all hail!

3RD STUDENT. Come, bear him to the tavern; 'tis not far!
The city hath decreed good wine for all,
And at the city's charge.

4TH STUDENT. Come then, let's on!

5TH STUDENT. Ay, set him shoulder high!
Our backs shall serve
In place of that stout steed that carried him.

[*They approach* VALENTINE, *who checks them.*

VALENTINE. Good comrades, wait awhile.
Ere that shall be
There's one I needs must greet the first of all,
My sister Margaret. There at her feet
I'll lay this sword, so hacked and carved with war,
And then we'll drink till dawn!

[SIEBEL, BRANDER, *and* OTHERS *have entered and stand in a silent group.*

Ah, Siebel there!
Brander! and thou, old Altmayer!—ay, and Frosch!

Well met, old friends! It seems an age and more
Since last I grasped your hands! So long, in truth,
I've grown a stranger to our city lanes.
Come, lead me on my way!

BRANDER. Where, Valentine?

VALENTINE. Where else but home to Margaret?

[SIEBEL *intervenes.*]

SIEBEL. Go not there!

VALENTINE. Why not?

SIEBEL. I dare not tell thee!

VALENTINE. Dare not? Speak!
Are ye all dumb? I am no more than man,
Yet being man, must school me to endure
What Heaven shall please to send. She is not dead?

SIEBEL. No, Valentine, not dead!

BRANDER. Would Heaven she were!

VALENTINE. What is it then that strangles all your tongues?

SIEBEL. Speak, Brander, for I cannot!

FROSCH. Nay, nor I!

BRANDER. 'Tis said thy mother died by Margaret's hand.

VALENTINE. My mother dead, and slain by Margaret!
Liar! I could choke thee!
BRANDER. I'd forgive thee that
Could I unsay what's said, undo what's done!
VALENTINE. This is some villainous slander. If God willed
In sudden wrath to change an angel child
Into a fiend, there would be cause for it.
What cause was here? She loved her mother well
And was as well beloved. Why should she take
That mother's life?
BRANDER. Nay, that is worst of all!
She took that mother's life to hide her shame.
VALENTINE. Liar! I'll go to her!

Enter BURGOMASTER

BURGOMASTER. Stay, Valentine!
We all had hoped to give thee public greeting
And a triumphant welcome from the town,
But this must stand aside till happier hours;
Our duty now gives no excuse for joy.
VALENTINE. Art thou, too, in this treachery, this plot
Against my sister's honour?

BURGOMASTER. If 'twere so,
The wrong were quickly righted. 'Tis not so.
Upon approvéd witness of her crime
Thy sister Margaret stands accused of murder,
And here I hold the warrant of the law
To arrest her as my prisoner.

VALENTINE. Is that all?
Does not your parchment publish some excuse
To inform the world why she, a maid so pure,
Should on a sudden turn a murderess?

BURGOMASTER. 'Tis known and proved that night thy mother died
An unknown gallant, stranger to our town,
Was seen to enter Margaret's chamber door,
Nor left it till the dawn.

ALTMAYER. Sure that was he
Whose comrade tricked us as we sat at wine!

FROSCH. 'Twas he, I'll warrant it!

VALENTINE. Enough! Enough!
We'll think of him hereafter. For the time
This must seem all—that all I loved is lost.
Now, comrades, turn those torches to the ground;
Oh, that I had found death in glorious war!
Or any stroke but this! But yesterday
Round the camp fire we sat and talked of home,
And as each comrade with a brimming cup

Toasted in turn the maid he loved the best,
I let them all run on, till at the last
With lifted glass I did but breathe her name,
And all were dumb. "'Tis true, 'tis true!"
they cried,
"In all our town there's but one Margaret,
The fairest, best of all!"—And now—and now—
Let every braggart spurn me as he will,
I have no answer, for her shame is mine.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *and* FAUST *are seen coming down the alley;* MEPHISTOPHELES *singing to the guitar, with* FAUST *beside him.*

SIEBEL. Why, here he comes! That knave who ruined her!

FROSCH. Ay, and that juggling villain by his side!

VALENTINE. Then stand aside. This issue must be mine,
And mine alone.

[*He draws his sword and approaches* MEPHISTOPHELES, *who still sings.*

Thou whining rat-catcher,
Whom now wilt thou allure? That blow's for thee!

[*He dashes the guitar to the ground.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. The lute is broken, so the song must cease.

VALENTINE. And thou who lurk'st behind, I've more for thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES. He knows thee, who thou art, yet stand thy ground.

VALENTINE. Draw, or I'll spit thee!

FAUST. Thou shalt have thy will!

[FAUST *draws.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Lunge on now, have no fear; I'll parry all. [*They fight.*

VALENTINE. Then parry that!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Why not?

VALENTINE. And that!

MEPHISTOPHELES. That too!

VALENTINE. I think the Devil's here, my arm grows weak.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Now is your time—thrust home!

[FAUST *lunges at* VALENTINE, *who falls.*

VALENTINE. O God, 'tis done!

[*The* CROWD *gathers round* VALENTINE.

MEPHISTOPHELES. He's skewered at last! Now quick, no word—away!

[*He throws his cloak round* FAUST *and they vanish.*

BURGOMASTER. There's murder here! Go, seize them both.

SIEBEL. They've gone!

BURGOMASTER. Whither?

BRANDER. I know not.
As we followed them
It seemed to me that they became as air.

BURGOMASTER. Look then to him who fell!

[MARTHA'S *head appears at the window above. And other heads from other windows.*

MARTHA. What brawl is this?

[MARGARET, *with a crowd of* CITIZENS, *enters from the Church.*

MARGARET. Who is it wounded there?

BRANDER. Thy mother's son.

MARGARET. Almighty God! Not dying?

VALENTINE. Ay, I'm dying,
Yet that may count for little. Cease your tears
And listen while ye may; my time is brief.

MARGARET. O Valentine!

VALENTINE. Why dost *thou* loiter here?
Thou shouldst be at thy trade. The night is young;

For what thou hast to sell there are buyers yet.

MARGARET. Dear God, have mercy!

VALENTINE. Thou wert best advised
To leave God's name alone. As yet 'tis plain
Thou art but a prentice hand—I'll grant thee that;
But custom starves all scruples, in a month
Thy beauty will be free of all the town,
And then when that same beauty's worn and spent
Thou'lt stalk the street a flaunting, painted thing,
Till at the last the flaring lights shall fright thee
And thou shalt lurk beneath some darkened arch,
A wanton to the end.

MARTHA. O slanderous tongue,
Commend thy soul to God!

VALENTINE. Foul hag of Hell,
If I could slay thee ere my life were spent,
I'd think that all my sins were all forgiven!

MARGARET. Oh, speak to me!

VALENTINE. It is too late! Too late!

I loved thee more than all! May God forgive thee!

Now like a soldier go I to my God.

[*He falls back dead.* MARGARET *swoons in the arms of* LISA, *and the* GUARD, *at a sign from the* BÜRGOMASTER, *gather round her.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

SCENE.—*The Walpurgis Night*

[*The summit of the Brocken. The Scene represents the verge of a great chasm with mountain peaks jutting up from the depths below. Across the gulf stands a high mountain with jagged sides. On the R. in front is a path descending to rocks. On the left, an uplifted crag overlooking the depths below.*

[*In a hollow at the foot of the crag the* WITCH *is seated by her cauldron. The Scene opens with thunder and lightning and a raging wind. On separate peaks that rise from the gulf* WITCHES *are posted as sentinels.*

1ST WITCH. What cry is in the air?
2ND WITCH. Our master comes.
I saw him riding by the raven stone.

3RD WITCH. Give warning down the gulf: from peak to peak,
Down to the lake that fills the crater bowl,
Follow the owlet's cry.

VOICE. [*Below.*] He comes!

2ND VOICE. He comes!

3RD VOICE. Away! Away! He is here.

VOICES. Away! Away!

[WITCHES *disappear as*

[MEPHISTOPHELES *and* FAUST *ascend the rocky path R.*

FAUST. I'll go no farther! Whither wouldst thou lead?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Upward to yonder crag whose nodding crown
Leans o'er the sulphurous vale.

FAUST. I'll climb no more!
Through shrieking caverns and o'er desert fells,
By cliff and headland down whose shuddering sides
The roaring cataract cleaves its thunder-road,—
Borne upward as a feather on the gale
Still have I followed thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES. As still thou shalt
Till I have shown thee all! Hark! 'tis the hour.

CHORUS

[*From below.*]

The witches ride to the Brocken top,
Upward and onward they may not stop.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *draws* FAUST *to the edge of the abyss.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Dost see them swarming in the mists below?
Now poised for flight, and herding in the sky
They blacken out the moon.

CHORUS

Upward and onward across the night
To the topmost beacon we take our flight!

[*During the* CHORUS *there is a flight of* WITCHES *across the sky.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Far down below
They scale each slope and crag, a myriad throng.
Round gnarled roots like serpents intercoiling,
O'er rock and boulder leaping, skipping, scudding,—
See how they press and jostle, push and scramble
To reach their master's feet! Yet some there are

That stumble on the path. Up! up! and on!
The Devil's road grows easier at the last!

[*As he speaks, the crags and mountain tops gradually fill with shadowy forms whose voices echo across the gulf.*

1ST WITCH. Whence comest thou?

2ND WITCH. Round by the Ilsen rock
I saw the white owl blinking on its nest.

3RD WITCH. Old Baubo rides upon a farrow sow.

4TH WITCH. Aye! Baubo first and all the flock to follow.

MEPHISTOPHELES. On then! and on! lest I should flay and score ye.

VOICE. [*From below.*] Hi! there! Ho!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay, heed him not, press on!

1ST WITCH. Who is it calls from the rocky lake below?

VOICE. [*From below.*] I've climbed and climbed three hundred years and more,
Yet cannot reach the top!

[*A wild laugh from the* WITCHES *as* MEPHISTOPHELES *looks down the gulf.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Old Dotard, no!

Hast not yet learned that towards the Devil's porch
The lighter step of woman wins the lead?
While club-foot man, a laggard even in sin,
Toils slowly at her heels. Trudge on, old fool!
Thou shalt reach the goal at last. Trudge on!
Trudge on!

[*Wild laughter again.*

CHORUS

With a rag for a sail
We soar on the gale,
Then swoop and fall
At our master' call.

FAUST. What are these shapes and wherefore are they here?

MEPHISTOPHELES. To-night Sir Mammon holds high holiday,
And these my vassal slaves are all his guests.
A goodly throng—see how they laugh and chatter!
Sweet witches all—they have their working days,
But now in wanton measure to and fro
They fill a vacant hour of liberty.
Dance on! Dance on!

[*The* WITCHES *dance; singing as they move.*

WITCHES' CHORUS

Through fog and fen, o'er broom and heather,
From hidden caves and from hill and dell,
As leaves that scatter and drift together
We draw to our master, the Lord of Hell.

The owlet's cry is the note we follow!
As the night-wind whistles its ceaseless tune,
We hurry and scurry o'er hill and hollow
With feet as fleet as the racing moon.

Now! the wind is hushed, the stars are falling,
The moon hath fled! the skies are bare;
Hark! Hark! in the dark 'tis the owlet calling!
The night is waning. Beware! Beware!

Dost hear her crying?
Below! Below!
The clouds are flying,
The night is dying!
We go! We go!

[*As the sound dies away the* WITCHES *gradually disappear.*

FAUST. What crazy world is this?

MEPHISTOPHELES. A world where worlds are made—a busy hive

Of murmuring bees whose poisoned honey-bags
Yield to men's lips that bitter-sweet called Love.
Here beauty ere it takes on mortal shape
Sips at the fount of sin, then onward speeding,
Enters Life's portals, gathering as it goes
The voices and the blossoms of the Spring.
Here the rough gold first takes its glittering sheen
To sate the greedy pangs of avarice;
Here crowns are fashioned, and on yonder anvil
For every crown a beaten blade is forged
To fit the usurper's hand. Glory and Power,
Ambition and the countless painted toys
That draw men onward in the race toward Hell
Here, by deft hands are decked and garlanded
To lure the world! my world!

FAUST. And is it here
Thou dost think to stay the memory of those tears
That drip and fall upon my coward soul
Like rain through ruined woods?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Good Doctor, no;
This is but preface to the feast to come.
See, here is more.

[*They approach the* WITCH'S *cauldron.*
Old huckster, I should know thee.

FAUST. And I too well!

WITCH. And I, I know ye both!

MEPHISTOPHELES. What hast thou here to please this Lord I serve?

WITCH. Good store of richest wares of every fashion
Most cunningly assorted. Scan them well!
For all have served their turn! That dagger there
Still bears upon it the red rust of blood!
Of all these jewelled cups there is not one
That hath not borne to lips now marble-white
The sleepy wine of death. There is no gem
Of all this glittering heap but once hath served
To bring a maid to shame.

FAUST. Foul hag, be dumb!

MEPHISTOPHELES. She doth mistake our errand.—All that's done
Is done.—To-night we seek from out the past
A fairer vision.

WITCH. Master, pay me then!
'Twas on the Brocken I should claim my fee;
So stood our bargain.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Wouldst thou threaten me?
I'll pay thee nought till I shall pay thee all.

WITCH. [*Aside.*] Then ere night ends I'll earn my fee in full,
And trick thee with a vision fair and foul
That shall affright ye both.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Cease! mumbling hag.

FAUST. Is this thy power? whose vilest ministers
Still mock and scoff at thee?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Wouldst know my power?
I who have changed thy lean and withered age
To this new garb of youth? Stand, then, and hearken
While from the void my hounds of Hell give tongue.

[*A roll of thunder with lightning gleam.*

CHORUS

[*From below.*]

Cling fast! cling fast!
The owlet is hiding
On the tail of the blast
Our master is riding.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Dost hear those thunder steeds whose clattering hoofs
Tear the night's covering to a tattered sheet?

Ride on! Ride on! my lightning lamps shall guide ye.

[*Drawing* FAUST *to the brink of the chasm.*

Look where old Chaos takes a newer fashion
As down the abyss the cloven mountains fall,
And shifting forests slide into the gulf.
Doth that content thee?

[*During this speech the rocks have sundered and fallen. Uprooted trees have crashed into the abyss, and the mountain across the gulf has been so shattered as to leave a vast cavern in its side.*

FAUST. Aye! no more! no more!
I have seen enough.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*Laughing.*] Nay, tremble not, good Doctor!
The work of demolition's always noisy;
Yet here it has served our turn; for yonder cleft
Carved by the thunder, yields a fitting stage
Whereon we'll summon for thy amorous glance
From out their scattered tombs those Queens of Love
Whom Time hath still left peerless.
[*To the* WITCH.] On, old Granny!
Quick! stir thy brew! and let the sport begin,

As high encamped upon this airy shelf
My Lord shall watch the pageant as it grows,
And claim of all these buried vanished lips
Whose kiss he fain would win! Lead on!
Lead on!

[*A group of young* WITCHES *leave the cauldron and draw* FAUST *with chains of flowers up to the summit of the crag where* MEPHISTOPHELES *is already standing. And as he follows them half entranced, the* CHORUS *is heard across the gulf and the* VISION *of* HELEN OF TROY *is gradually revealed.*

CHORUS

Once more upon the purple main
That scudding sail doth bear her home,
Troy's cindered towers are fired again
And flare across the crimsoned foam.

MEPHISTOPHELES. See how they press around her, all her train,
She for whose lips the world was drenched in blood,
Yet note that changeless beauty bears no trace
Of all her countless slain.

FAUST. Helen?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Aye, Helen,
My loyal subject Queen who shattered Troy,
And dyed the Ægean with a Tyrrian stain.

FAUST. Draw, closer, closer, till I touch those lips.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Nay! wait awhile! I know an Orient bough
Whereon there hangs a riper, ruddier fruit
Embrowned by Egypt's sun. Lead on, sweet hag!
The feast is not half served.

WITCH. [*From her cauldron.*] Nay, Sire, there is more,
As thou shalt learn before the cauldron cools.

[*The* VISION *of* HELEN *has faded as the* CHORUS *is renewed.*

CHORUS

Down old Nilus' vacant stream
Steers, with silken sail unfurled,
She who in a golden dream
Chained the masters of the world.

Ever toying, never cloying,
Soul and body ever new,
All enjoyed and all enjoying,
Ever false and ever true!

[*During the* CHORUS *the* VISION *of* CLEOPATRA *is revealed, preceded by* EGYPTIAN DANCING GIRLS.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Dost see her, Faust?
The ruin that she wrought
Lies buried deep beneath the shifting Nile,
While she whose conquering beauty laughed at Time
Sails o'er the centuries to greet her Lord.
Fair Cleopatra, kindred serpent soul,
I hail thee peerless still!

FAUST. And I! And I!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Doth that not tempt thee?

FAUST. Let me but print one kiss
Between those breasts that cushioned Antony;
There is no more to win.

[*The* VISION *fades.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Wait till the close,
Then thou shalt choose at will. [*To* WITCH.
Go back to Rome.

WITCH. Aye, back to Rome, and back and back again!

CHORUS

She stands by Tiber's reddened flood!
That door she guards is Love's last tomb,
Those gilded breasts are smeared with blood
Wrung from the ruined heart of Rome.

[*During the* CHORUS *the* VISION *of* MESSALINA *appears.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Look where she stands, passion's ungrudging slave,
Who leased a throne to wear a strumpet's crown.
Hail! Messalina, whose enfolding arms
Caught to thee nightly all the lust of Rome,
Those crimson lips have drained the lees of Love
In many a Stygian stew: yet drink again,—
My master holds the cup.

FAUST. Nay, let her pass;
'Tis not so fair.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Then count the feast as ended.
Where falls thy choice?

WITCH. My master, wait awhile.
Yet one remains, the last and best of all.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Wretch, wilt thou trick me?

WITCH. Look again and see.

[*The* VISION *of* MESSALINA *fades as the* CHORUS *is repeated.*

CHORUS

The Springtime comes, the Springtime goes,
The lily changes to the rose,
Now Spring hath fled,
And Summer is dead,
And dead the Lily! and dead the Rose!

[*During the* CHORUS *the lonely figure of* MARGARET *is revealed with chains about her wrists, her dead child lying at her feet.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. [*To* WITCH.] Foul hag, I'll scorch thee!

WITCH. Master, I am paid!

[*With a wild yell she rises into the air and vanishes across the gulf.*

FAUST. Look! it is Margaret! What to me the past?
What any queen re-risen from the grave?
I can see nothing but that lovely form.

But what is that lies frozen at her feet?

MEPHISTOPHELES. What lieth at her feet thou shouldst know.

FAUST. Those eyes are turned upon me! Margaret, stay!
Across the gulf of Hell I'll fly to thee.
Go, bear me to that prison where she lies,
Her anguish is my anguish, all her sin
Is mine to suffer, aye, or mine to cure.
To her! to her! bear me away. On! On!

[*There is a crash of thunder, and of a sudden the gulf swarms with* WITCHES *who shriek amidst the thunder as* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *disappear.*

SCENE II

SCENE.—*A prison cell*

[MARGARET *is lying in a stupor chained on a bed of straw at the back. The sound of a key in the lock is heard, and* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *enter.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. See! there she lies!
Quick, rouse her! We must fly.
Drugged lies the jailor; but I cannot say
When he may wake and blunder on us here.
FAUST. [*Gazing on* MARGARET.] The woe
of the whole earth catches at my heart.
And then! Ah, stand and roll thy devilish eyes:
This is thy work! Lo, in a dungeon shut,
Delivered up to torment and to night!
From me thou hast concealed this ruin, me
With hollow dissipations hast thou lulled.
MEPHISTOPHELES. She's not the first!

FAUST. Abortion! Not the first!
Did not the first in her death agony
Expiate all the guilt of all the rest?
Her single misery to my marrow pierces,
And thou art grinning at the doom of thousands.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Why dost thou make a compact with the Devil
And canst not see it out? Did I on thee
Thrust myself? Come, confess! Or thou on me?

FAUST. Rescue her: or the curse of ages on thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Rescue her? Who then plunged her into ruin?
Whose kisses stretched her on that bed of straw?
Whose hot embraces cast those chains on her?
[FAUST *looks wildly round.*
Wilt grasp the thunder? Lucky thou canst not.

FAUST. She shall be free!

MEPHISTOPHELES. O maudlin murderer,
Weep over thy victim sentimental tears!

FAUST. Free her—or——

MEPHISTOPHELES. Gently! I will watch without
And keep the jailor mazed in a deep sleep,

But not for long! Drag her away with thee.
The magic steeds are ready. Quick!

FAUST. Begone!

[*Exit* MEPHISTOPHELES.

[FAUST *approaches* MARGARET *who starts up dishevelled.*

MARGARET. Oh, they are come for me! O death of deaths!

FAUST. Margaret! I have come to set thee free once more.
Come let us fly—give me your hand, come, come.

MARGARET. [*Looking at him.*] Who art thou? Oh, it is not morning yet.
Sir, let me live till dawn! And I am still
So young, and fair, but that was my undoing.

[FAUST *seizes the chains, endeavouring to unlock them.*

What have I done to thee? Use me not roughly!

FAUST. Margaret, look on me! I am thy lover.

MARGARET. [*Looking earnestly at him.*] I ne'er saw thee before in all my life.
I had a lover, but he's far away.
Love, did I weary thee?

FAUST. Can I outlive
These stabbing words?
MARGARET. Ah, let me suckle first
My baby: but they've taken it away,
And they sing songs about me in the street.
They should not do it.
FAUST. I love thee for ever.
MARGARET. See he is coming! The evil one: Hell heaves
In thunder—see he makes towards his prey.
FAUST. Margaret!
MARGARET. Ah, that was my lover's voice.
Margaret! So now in the howl of Hell
Still on his bosom I shall lie again.
'Tis he! The garden once again I see
Where thou and I walked up and down in bliss.
FAUST. [*Struggling with her.*] Come! Come away!
MARGARET. Dost thou not care to kiss me?
Once didst thou kiss as thou wouldst stifle me.
FAUST. Follow me, darling—oh, delay no more!
MARGARET. But is it thou, thou surely?
FAUST. It is I.
Come, come away!

MARGARET. My mother I have killed
But out of love for thee!

FAUST. Can I endure?

MARGARET. The baby too, our baby, I have drowned.

FAUST. Oh, swiftly, swiftly! the night vanishes.

MARGARET. It tries to rise, it 'struggles still; quick, seize it.

FAUST. One step and thou art free: I must use force.

[*He seizes her to bear her away.*

MARGARET. Oh, grasp me not so murderously, sir.

FAUST. Day! day is dawning.

MARGARET. Yes, 'tis the last day.
Hark to the crowd! They push me to the block:
Now o'er each neck the blade is quivering
That quivers over mine! Dumb lies the world.

[*She falls back on his arm.*

FAUST. God! She is dying! I shall never free her.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *entering quickly.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Fast, fast! to all love-making put an end,

My coursers shiver in the morning air.
Away!

FAUST. No! She is dying: cold she grows.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Leave her if she is cold: no moment more.

FAUST. I will not—cannot—— Margaret! Margaret!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Wouldst thou die with her?

FAUST. I can leave her not.

MEPHISTOPHELES. The living wait thee! Stay not by the dead!

FAUST. Leave me! I go not!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Come to fresher faces,
Others have warm blood still.

[MARGARET *dies.*

FAUST. Ah! she is dead!
No motion: chill all o'er!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Faust, wilt thou come?

FAUST. Never!

MEPHISTOPHELES. Farewell then!

[*Exit* MEPHISTOPHELES.

[FAUST *lays her reverently on the bed, composing her limbs.*

FAUST. I with thee must die.

For I am fainting with thy faintness, I
Am going with thee fast. I ebb and sink
After thee, and my blood thy blood pursues.
Hath thy heart stopped? Mine slow and slower beats.
Still is thy pulse? My pulse is faltering!
Where'er thou goest I with thee shall go,
Whether thou catch me into highest Heaven,
Or I involve thee in the lowest Hell.
Margaret, Margaret! after thee I come
And rush behind thee in thy headlong flight.
Dim grows the world.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *appears in the dress he wore in the Prologue.*

Is this the film of death?
Do I behold thee, Mephistopheles,
Or some superior angel? Now no more
The sneering smile and jaunty step I see;
I feel that thou art Evil yet dost wear
Evil's auguster immortality.
Say wherefore art thou come?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Remember, Faust,
Thy compact. Though it pleased me to take on
A lighter shape more easily to lure thee,
Yet know I am that Spirit who rebelled

With whom a million angels mutinied.
Behold the thunder-scar and withered cheek!
With me, then, was thy holy compact signed.

FAUST. Though I should die yet thou canst fright me not.
Even from thy lips shall I believe the tale
Of burning coals and everlasting fire
And all the windy jargon of the priests?

MEPHISTOPHELES. Far other is that Hell where thou shalt live.
As I did serve thee faithfully on earth,
Thou faithfully shalt serve me after death.
Listen! On dreadful errands shalt thou go,
On journeys fraught with mischief to the soul,
Shalt be a whisperer in the maiden's ears
Drawing her to defilement—shalt persuade
The desperate to self-slaughter, thou shalt guide
The murderer to his work, thou shalt instil
Into the child its first polluting thought,
And bring to the world's apple many an Eve.
In taverns shalt thou drink invisibly
Urging the drinkers on, and thou shalt walk
With painted women to and fro the streets.
So, Faust, shalt thy eternity be spent
Seducing and polluting human souls,
Purveying anguish, madness, through the world.

This was thy compact: this shalt thou fulfil.

FAUST. Horrible! horrible! Yet do I defy thee.

Hast thou fulfilled thy promise, brought an hour—

A single hour—to which I could cry "Stay,

Thou art so fair"?

MEPHISTOPHELES. That hour shall come;

My service is not ended. Countless years

Are left thee yet ere life's full cup be drained.

Up, then, and on!

FAUST. Weary and stale the life

Thou gavest me; from pleasure hurled to pleasure,

And evermore satiety and hate.

Weary and stale is all that's yet to come.

Though countless years, chained ever at thy side,

Be still my doom, my spirit newly winged

Outspeeds the flight of time. That flower I crushed

And trod beneath my feet, see where it springs

And blooms again in Heaven's serener air.

Beyond the night I see the final dawn

Wherein from out that ruin I have wrought,

Purged at the last, my soul shall win its way

Whither her soul hath sped. The laggard years,

That chain me prisoner to this desert earth,
Though in their sum they should consume all time,
Were all too short for what is left to do.
Up, then, and on! I shall abide the end;
Still I fight upward, battle to the skies,
And still I soar for ever after her.
I shall go past thee, Mephistopheles,
For ever upward to the woman soul!
How long? How long?

[*Rolling clouds ascend obscuring the stage, until the First Scene, the neutral mountains, is discovered again. During the change a* CHORUS *of invisible* ANGELS *is heard from above.*

CHORUS

All the unnumbered years of man
Count not against thy larger day
That flushed and dawned ere time began,
And still runs radiant on its way.

Onward and on in ceaseless flight
The rolling centuries race by,
Onward to where thy torches light
The threshold of Eternity.

[*When the scene is fully revealed,* MARGARET *is seen lying robed in white at the feet of* RAPHAEL, *the* OTHER ANGELS *attending.* MEPHISTOPHELES *remains below.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. Lo! on this neutral ground
I reappear
To claim of the Most High the soul of Faust.
Is not the wager won? Have I not drawn
A high aspiring spirit from his height,
Plunged it at will in lust and wantonness?
Hath not this servant of the King of Heaven,
This famous Doctor, proud philosopher,
Seduced a maiden to a grave of shame,
To drug her Mother, and to drown her Child?
While he with his own hand her Brother slew!
Have I not now reclaimed a soul for Night?
Have I not now the great world wager won?
Answer!

[*An* ANGEL *alights on the topmost peak as in the Prologue.*

THE ANGEL. The great world wager thou hast lost,
And, seeking to confound, hast saved a soul.
When for thine own ends thou didst fire his heart

For Margaret, and inflamed his lustful blood
So that they sinned together, yet that sin
So wrapped them that a higher, holier love
Hath sprung from it; where once their bodies burned
Their spirits glow together, what was fire
Is light, and that which scorched doth kindle now.
Thou, thou hast sped him on a nobler flight,
Thou, thou hast taught him to aspire anew,
Thou through the woman soul hast brought him home.

[ANGELS *are seen bearing the soul of* FAUST *upwards towards* MARGARET.

Hither the spirit angel-wafted floats
While she her saving arms outspreads to him.

MEPHISTOPHELES. Still to the same result I war with God:
I will the evil, I achieve the good.

CURTAIN.

Printed by R. & R. CLARK, LIMITED, *Edinburgh.*

00023093

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 June, 2018